

DISCOURSES

ON SEVERAL

Important SUBJECTS.

By GILBERT TENNENT, A. M.

Minister of the Gospel in *Philadelphia*.



PHILADELPHIA.

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The Nature of JUSTIFICATION opened:

A

SERMON.

PREACH'D AT

PHILADELPHIA,

January the 27th, 1744-5.

On GALATIANS II. 16

WITH ENLARGEMENTS.

By GILBERT TENNENT, A. M.
Minister of the Gospel in Philadelphia.

Publish'd at the Desire of the Hearers.

Rom. iii. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a Man is justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law.*

Rom. xi. 5, 6. *Even so then at this present Time also there is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace. And if by Grace, then it is no more of Works; otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace: Otherwise Work is no more Work.*

Titus iii. 8. *This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works: These Things are good and profitable unto Men.*

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the Bible in Second Street, 1745.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

CANDID READER,

THE following Discourse treats of
a Foundation-Point of the Christian
Religion, which it concerns all to un-
derstand well, and which I fear,
many have but very superficial Notions of:
This has doubtless a bad Influence upon their
other religious Sentiments and Practice.

There is no other sure Foundation but
CHRIST JESUS, if we build not upon him

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for Pardon, Peace and Happiness, the Fa-
brick will surely fall, (debile Fundamentum
fallit opus.) I have endeavoured to open this
grand Article of Religion in the plainest
Manner I could, that so the weakest Minds
may have just Conceptions of it.

The Light in which I have set this Point,
is agreeable to the Series of sacred Scripture;
and the harmonious Suffragé of the reformed
Churches of Scotland, Holland, France,
Geneva, England, Germany, &c. express'd
in their Confessions of Faith; which altho'
licentious Wits, who are disposed to be as
loose and inconsistent in their Sentiments as
Morals, may deride and burlesque as slavish
Systems beneath their Notice, will notwith-
standing be esteemed by the Sober and Judicious,
as instructive and valuable Summaries of
divine Truth, so long as there be any Remains
of true Religion in these Nations!

Its affecting to think how Mankind are
inclin'd to run from one extreme to another.
Some who have left the Principles of Armi-
nius, not thorowly understanding the Dec-
trines

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v

trines of Grace, run into the contrary extreme of Antinomianism, which is as dishonourable to Religion, and injurious to the Interest of it as the other, if not more so!

Now as Vertue consists in a Mediocrity between two Extremes, so do the Doctrines of Religion, and especially this of Justification, we should therefore beware, lest while we labour to shun Scilla, we rush upon Caribdis.

*I had no Intention of publishing this Discourse when I preach'd it, having offered to the Publick a Sermon upon Justification some Years ago, but was induced hereto, by considering the Difficulty and Importance of the Subject, and the wrong Notions that many have of it, with design to give check to them. I was also inform'd, that a few of the Hearers were dissatisfied, and many more entertain'd with a Method of handling the Subject different from what they had heard; and therefore to remove the unreasonable Censures of some, and satisfy the Desires of others, I consented to its publication; not
knowing*

The P R E F A C E.

knowing that it had committed any Thing
worthy of bands or of death. May it please
the God of Truth to bless what is here offered
for the Good of his Church, I add no more,
but remain thine and the Churches Friend
and Servant,

Philadel^a. Feb.
15th, 1744-5.

G. TENNENT.

GALATIANS II. 16.

Knowing that a Man is not justify'd by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law: For by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.

MY Brethren! As God the Father has from Eternity purposed to confer saving Benefits upon the Elect in Time *, so the Son of God in consequence hereof has made a Purchase of them by his Blood and Obedience †; and these very Benefits does the Holy Spirit apply in time to the Heirs of Salvation ‡. Before which Application by the Holy Spirit's Influence, and Union of the Elect to Christ by Faith, they have no actual Right to the Blessings of Redemption, but are Children of Wrath and under condemnation.

* Eph. i. 4. † Rev. v. 9. ‡ John. xvi. 8, 9.

damnation ¶. *Jesus Christ must be made of God to us* (i. e. by application) *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption* †. *The Elect must be sanctified by the Spirit unto Obedience, and sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus* * : And hence Christ and his Benefits are frequently compar'd in Scripture, to such Things as do not profit us without Application; such as *Cloaths, Meat, Drink and Medicine*. ** *Meat* not eaten will not nourish us, *Drink* not drunk will not refresh us, a *Garment* not put on will not warm us, and *Medicines* not applied will not heal us: And therefore we may safely assert, that the *Application* of *Redemption* to the Soul, by the Holy Spirit's Influence, is as necessary in its Place in order to Salvation, as the *Purchase* of it by *Christ's Blood* and Obedience. As we are not condemn'd actually, on the Account of the Sin of our first Parents, until we actually exist and are united to them naturally, by partaking of a vitiated Nature derived from

¶ Eph. ii. 3. John iii. 18. 36. † 1 Cor. i. 30. * † Ret. i. 2. ** Rev. iii. 18. John vi. 54, 45.

from them : So neither are we actually justified by the Righteousness of the second *Adam*, until we are spiritually united to him as our mystical Head by Faith †. But so soon as this Union is obtain'd, an actual Communion in the Benefits of Redemption immediately ensues, among which Justification is a primary and principal one : Of this the Apostle treats in the Words of our Text. To understand which let it be considered, that the Occasion of writing this Epistle to the Churches of *Galatia*, (a Country in the *Lesser Asia*) was partly to reprove and reduce some Members of these Churches, who had as shamefully as perilously Apostatiz'd from the important Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, thro' the corrupt Influence of some false Teachers who crept in among them, and taught the Necessity of Circumcision and other Works of the Law, in order to the Justification of a Sinner before God ; and this they did with a political Design, to screne themselves from that Persecution which all the Christians

B

were

† John i. 12. Rom. v. 19.

were then expos'd to who were not Circumcis'd; and in order to promote their new and pernicious Doctrine, they pursued the Method which is common to Hereticks and Seducers in every Age of the Church; viz. They made great Shews of Religion, commended themselves, traduc'd and vilified the Apostle *Paul*, insinuating that he was no Apostle, that he had learn'd all he knew from *James*, *Peter* and *John*, and yet differ'd from them in Doctrine and Practice, as well as from himself. Now the Apostle does not only in this Epistle labour to reclaim the erring *Galatians*, but likewise to vindicate his Character from the unjust and invidious Charges of the false Teachers: To this purpose the first and second Chapters of this Epistle are chiefly spent: The inspir'd Writer does therein prove himself to be a true Apostle, and not to have learn'd what he taught from *Peter*, *James* or *John*, but that he had it by Revelation from *Jesus Christ*. In the Verses immediately preceeding our Text, the Apostle shews that he was so far from receiving the Gospel he preach'd from *Peter*, that he faithfully

fully reprov'd him for his judaizing Dis-
simulation, and then in the plainest Terms
asserts Justification to be by Faith only.
*Knowing that a Man is not justified by the
Works of the Law, but by the Faith of
Jesus Christ, i. e. being perswaded that a
Person is not freed from the Guilt of Sin,
and adjudg'd righteous in the Sight of
GOD by Acts of Obedience to the Law
of Moses, either Ceremonial or Moral ; but
by Faith in Christ, which as an Eye beholds
and as a Hand applies his Righteousness.
The moral Law was doubtless intended
by the Apostle as well as the Ceremonial :*
“ For it is Manifest, that altho' this Questi-
“ on about Justification by Works began
“ about Circumcision, and Works done in
“ Obedience to the Ceremonial Law, yet
“ the Determination of it extended farther ;
“ for the Apostle by the Law understands
“ that Law by which is the Knowledge
“ of Sin †. Now the Knowledge of Sin
“ is neither, only or chiefly by the Cere-
“ monial Law ; nor did ever any of those

† Rom. iii. 20.

“ against whom the Apostle argueth, think
 “ that Men could be justified by Obedi-
 “ ence only to the *Law contain'd in Or-*
 “ *dinances*; nor could boasting be excluded
 “ if Men might be justified by Works
 “ done in Obedience to the Moral Law:
 “ Nor was it the Violation of the Ceremo-
 “ nial Law only that *arougeth Wrath*, and
 “ expos'd Men to the *Curse.*” † The A-
 postle proceeds to say, *even we have believ'd*
in Jesus Christ that we might be justified
by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works
of the Law. Here observe that the A-
 postle represents Justification not as a Thing
 past but future, and as following Faith;
 as if he had said, “ We *Jews* as well as
 “ the *Gentiles*, are in a State of Wrath
 “ and Condemnation before Faith, not-
 “ withstanding of our Religious Priviledges,
 “ which being made sensible of, as well
 “ as the utter Insufficiency of any Acts of
 “ Obedience we have or can perform, to
 “ free us from the Guilt of Sin, and acquire
 “ for us a Right to Happiness; and being
 “ perswaded

† *Rom. vi. 15. Gal. vi. 10. vid Pool. Anotati. in Lec.*

“ perswaded of the Safety of entire De-
“ pendence upon the Righteousness of the
“ Mediator for our Acceptance with God,
“ we have consented to embrace him upon
“ Gospel Terms, and reject all Refuges be-
“ sides him, and that because, *by the*
“ *Works of the Law shall no Flesh be*
“ *justified, i. e.* no mortal Man can rea-
sonably expect, or ever attain to be de-
clar'd Righteous before God, on the Ac-
count of his Obedience to the Law of God,
because of its Imperfection.

From what has been said it appears,
that the Point to be discours'd upon from
this Text, is the Manner of a Sinner's
Justification before God. It cannot be Jus-
tification before Men, or the evidencing
of the reality of our faith to them that is
here intended; for good Works would not
then be wholly rejected, being of princi-
pal Use in that Case; by those, as the Apostle
James observes, *our Faith is shewn* or disco-
ver'd. † *i. e.* Its reality is manifested to
others, and evidenc'd to our selves. And
hence

hence he concludes *that a Man is justified by Works and not by Faith only, † i. e.* in the sight of Men. High Pretences to and a great Bluster about Faith and Experiences, when these Things are not crown'd with a holy and humble Conversation, are justly rejected by the Sober and Judicious, as Instances of Hypocrisy and Delusion. That Faith that don't produce good Works is *dead and unprofitable, †* and therefore cannot be the Instrument of our Justification before God. What has been said serves to remove the seeming Contrariety between the two Apostles *Paul* and *James* and shew their Harmony: To which let me add, that they wrote to different Sorts of People, *Paul* directed his Discourse of Justification without Works to *Pharisees*, and such as were of a Self-righteous Cast, who depended securely upon their Acts of Obedience, and tho't thereby in some Degree at least to procure the divine Favour: These ambitious *Babel-builders*, the Apostle *Paul* labours to shake from the Summit of their

† Jam. ii. 24. † Jam. ii. 14, 17.

their Self-righteousness in point of Dependence, that to being made *poor in spirit*, they might learn to *submit to*, and lean alone upon the Mediator's Righteousness for acceptance with God. †

But the Apostle *James* had to do with a *Club of Libertines*, who made high Pretences to Faith and Justification by it, while they went on in a Course of Impiety in Practice: These hardy Hypocrites he takes to task and shews the Vanity of their Pretences; by declaring, that that Faith that justified us before God, was a vital active Grace, productive of good Works; and that good Works were necessary to evidence to the World about us, the Truth of our Faith and the reality of our Justification, whatever lawless Libertines might unjustly mutter against them notwithstanding! But to return: As it is not Justification before Men that is intended in our Text, as appears from what has been said; so neither is it a Justification in the Sight of Conscience, for good Works are of great Use to

† Phil. iii. 8, 9.

to evidence thereto the Safety of our State: *Hereby* (says the Apostle *John*) *we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments; and he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar and the Truth is not in him †*: (And elsewhere he assures us) *that if we say we have Fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the Truth; but if we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, we have Fellowship one with another ‡*: i. e. If we go on in a Course of Holiness, which is here call'd Light, we have an Evidence of true Communion with God, which is a Fruit of Reconciliation to him.

It remains therefore, that it is Justification before God only, that the Apostle treats of in our Text, and asserts *to be by Faith without the Works of the Law*. This being the Substance and Scope of the Text, I shall in order to prepare it for Improvement, speak upon the two following Heads, *viz.*

I. *Attempt to explain the Nature of Justification.* And

II. *Prove*

II. Prove that it is without the Works of the Law.

That the Word *justify* is not to be taken in a *moral Sense*, as intending a real, inward Change of the Temper and Disposition of the Soul, as the Papists imagine, (for that is properly call'd Sanctification) but in a *Law-Sense*, as importing a juridical Act of God, whereby as a Judge he acquits the Sinner from Guilt and accepts him into Favour, appears from the following Considerations, *viz.*

First, From the etymological *Derivation* of the Word *justify*, it is deriv'd from a Word that signifies *Right*, as judicially pronounced according to law. *

Secondly, From its common *Acceptation* in Scripture, the Passages that treat of Justification can admit of no other than a *Law-Sense*; † and hence the judicial Process is describ'd in the sacred Writings; mention is made of the Law accusing, and of the Guilty arraign'd, as being without Apology, having

C

* *Dicaturus a dice.* † Ex. xxiii. 7. Deut. xxv. 1. Job ix. 1, 2. Psalm cxliii. 2. Prov. xvii. 15. Luke xviii. 14. Rom. iii. 4, 5, 6, ---24, 25, 26.

*having their Mouths stop't; ¶ and divine Justice is likewise represented as demanding Punishment. * And Christ is set forth as an Advocate pleading our Cause, by the important Argument of his Sufferings, and thereby of his Satisfaction to Justice; and hence the Apostles John and Paul inform us, that we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who ever lives to make Intercession for us †; and elsewhere Christ is said to appear as a Lamb slain in the midst of the Throne, ** and that his Blood speaks better Things than the Blood of Abel ††. The Scripture also mentions a Throne of Grace before which we must come, || and speaks of God as a Judge, passing the Sentence of Absolution. ¶¶*

Thirdly, Justification in Scripture is oppos'd to condemnation; to this Purpose are these Words of the Apostle in his Epistle to the Romans, viz. Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that
Justifieth

¶ Rom. iii. 19. * Rom. iii. 25, 26. † 1 John ii. 1.
 ** Rev. v. 6 †† Heb. xii. 24. || Heb. iv. 16. ¶¶
 Rom. iii. 19, 20. Rom. iv. 5.

*Justifieth, who is he that condemneth? **

Now as Accusation and Condemnation are in Judgment, so by consequence is Justification.

Fourthly, The equivalent Phrases in Scripture whereby our Justification is describ'd, relate to Judgment or a Course of Justice; hence our Lord saith, that he that believeth on him that sent him, shall not come into Judgment; ¶ for so the original Word primarily signifies; † it is likewise call'd Reconciliation, ‡ remission of Sin, and imputing of Righteousness. ††

Well, seeing the Word *Justify*, is evidently a *Law-Term*, and alludes to civil Courts of Judicature, it will therefore help us to understand Justification, if we compare it with the *Process* of Civil Courts, which consists especially in three Things, *viz.* (1st.) A Person is charged with guilt. (2^{dly}.) He pleads to his Charge. (3^{dly}.) If the Plea be relevant or sufficient, he is discharg'd by the Judge; thus it is in Justification.

C 2

1st.

* Rom. viii. 33, 34. ¶ John v. 24. † *Crisin a crine*
 ‡ Rom. v. 10. †† Rom. iv. 6.

1st. The Elect are *charg'd* with *guilt* by the Law and Justice, and hence the Apostle assures us in his Epistle to the *Romans*, that *whatsoever the Law says, it says to those that are under the Law; that every Mouth may be stoped, and all the World may become guilty before God.* † Here observe my Brethren, that the Elect before they are enabled to believe in Christ, are under the Law and guilty before God, (or in his Sight) now what is guilt, but an Obligation to suffer eternal Punishment for Sin? The Almighty having made reasonable Creatures capable of moral Government, was pleas'd to give them a Law to direct them in it, and that arm'd with the Threatning of eternal Death against the Transgressor; the Threatning being but equal to the demerit of Sin, and necessary as a Guard to screen the Law from Insult and Contempt; and God having denounc'd it, his Justice and Truth were engag'd to see to the Execution of it upon the Transgressor: Now we have sinn'd or transgress'd
the

† Rom. iii. 19. *Flupidocos to theo (O kupo ten dicein oon)*
under God's condemnatory Sentence.

the Law, and therefore are bound by the Threatning annex'd to it to suffer Punishment.

2dly. The Sinner being accus'd, must *plead* for himself, either in his own Person or by *Proxy* or Advocate, for Silence gives consent to the Condemnation. The *English* Law orders those that won't plead to be press'd to Death. If a Person be not accus'd, he may be indeed *prais'd* but cannot be *justify'd*, and if he is accus'd he must plead or die. Now

3dly. What shall the Sinner plead? he cannot plead not guilty truly, for *we have all sinn'd and come short of the Glory of God.* † And Every Sin deserves Death and the Curse of God: † Yea as the Apostle *James* observes, *he that offends in one Point, is guilty of all:* * *i.e.* He despises that Authority by which all are established, and becomes infected with a Disposition to violate all,

And a false Plea will not avail to Justification, except there be some defect in the *Judge, Evidence* or *Law*, neither of which

† Rom. iii. 23. † Rom. vi. 23. * James ii. 10.

which can be justly apply'd to the present Case, for God is inviolably Holy and inflexibly Righteous: † Conscience is as a thousand Witnesses, yea and all Events happen under the Judges Eye and Cognizance; to him *the Darkness is as the Light, and the Night shines as the Day.* ‡ Add to this, that the Law by which the Sinner is to be try'd *is holy, just and good.* * An invariable Standard of Equity, the very copy and exemplar of the moral Excellencies of the divine Nature. Well, seeing the judge is impartial, the Evidence demonstrative, and the Law strictly and unalterably Just, grounded on the Nature, Reason and Relations of Things; then it follows necessarily, that a false Plea instead of serving our Interest, does but increase our Guilt and Danger.

Indeed the Angels that never fell, or *Adam* in Innocency, might plead *not guilty* and be justified upon the *Plea*, but this our Apostacy from God has rendred impossible for us.

We

† Deut. xxxii. 4. ‡ Psalm cxxxix. 12. * Rom. vii. 12.

We being guilty, there remains but one of the three Pleas for us to make that I know of. The

First of which is *Mercy*, for *Mercy's sake*; and indeed this is not to plead at all, but beg; and were a Person discharged so; it wou'd be *pure Pardon* but no *Justification*; for there shines no *Beam of Justice* in such a *Discharge*, and truly such a *Way of removing Guilt*, does not suit with the governing *Wisdom, Justice and Truth of God*, or with his *Holiness*, which disposes him to hate *Sin* and manifest his *Indignation* against it. † I may add, that such a *Method of removing Guilt*, interferences with the *publick Good of the Universe*, by bringing into contempt the *Governor of it*, and that *Law by which it should be rul'd*, the *Observance* whereof tends so much to its true *Interest*: How can the *Honour of the Law* be preserv'd, or the *Design of Government* answer'd, when the *rebellious Violaters of it* are ever pardon'd
with

† ' To hate Sin is essential to Holiness, (says Mr *Clarkson*) and this includes a Will to punish it. *Vid. Sermon. p. 230.*

with Impunity, without any Satisfaction made equal to the Offence? We are sure that such a Method of proceeding is contrary to the Sentiments and Practice of Mankind in the Affairs of civil Government.

Nor will a *Composition*, or as some term it, an *Acceptilation* answer the Design of Government: *i. e.* When something is accepted which is far from an Equivalent to the Guilt contracted; *e. g.* as if a Creditor should accept of a few Pence instead of a Thousand Pounds which was due; this is in Substance the same with a free Pardon, and therefore the Reasons that militate against the one, do likewise hold good against the other, to which for the Sake of brevity I shall not add, but proceed to a

Second Plea, which is *proper Payment*, and this is also vain, for the Sinner cannot do it himself without being eternally miserable, and the surety has not done it for him. To understand which let it be considered, that *Payment*, properly so call'd, is when that is precisely perform'd, which was in the Obligation in all its Circumstances and

Accidentals

Accidentals in which the Creditor is obliged to rest satisfi'd, and by which the Debtor is freed without any Grace. This does not take Place in Redemption my Brethren, for the Mediator did not endure all those bodily and spiritual Penalties threatn'd by the Law, such as the Pestilence, Deafness, &c. † Neither did he bear our spiritual Death or the Eternity of Hell Torments. I say our Lord did not endure those Penalties now mentioned *precisely* and *circumstantially*, according to the Letter of the Law's threatnings, consider'd as they respect Man already fallen, and under a Reprieve. The Law obliged all Sinners to suffer *personally, universally* and *eternally*. But Christ was no Sinner really or inherently, being holy harmless and undefil'd, ‡ otherwise he could not be a surety for Sinners, and would be unworthy of our Trust: And therefore, when he is said *to be made Sin and a Curse for us, who knew no Sin*, no more is intended then that the Guilt of the Sins of the Elect was reckon'd to him as their Surety

D ty

† *Dent.* xxviii. 15. to the 68 Verse. ‡ *Heb.* vii. 26.

ty or Representative, or which is the same; the Punishment due for their Sins, was laid upon him under the aforesaid Character, and that he was made a Sacrifice for their Iniquities. Altho' the blessed JESUS by his Father's *Constitution* became one with the Elect *in Law*, and is our *Kinsman* by his *Incarnation*, which prepare the Way for his redeeming us, yet he is not one Person with us *naturally*.

Christ Jesus was but one Man, (in respect of his human Nature) and did not suffer *eternally*, otherwise he would be suffering now, which we are assur'd by the Testimony of the inspir'd Writings is false, ¶ and therefore *proper Payment* cannot be truly plead.

The Almighty was not oblig'd in strict Justice (without Respect had to the Covenant of Redemption) to accept on the Account of the Elect what Christ did and suffered for them. And hence there surely was Grace in the Proposal, and Acceptance of this Scheme, as well as there is in the Application of it to us.

In

In the mean Time as our Sins are call'd *Debts* in a large and less proper Sense, so that by which their Guilt is remov'd may be call'd *Payment* in the same Sense.

3dly. The only Plea therefore, that remains for a poor guilty Creature, is to ask Pardon and Mercy on the Account of some *equivalent* offer'd to divine Justice, whereby it is appeas'd and the Honour of the Law supported. This the Sinner cannot offer for himself, being both imperfect and finite : Whereas Sin is objectively Infinite, being committed against an infinite God, and a Breach of infinite Obligations to him. Now Justice requires that there be a Proportion between the Crime committed and the Satisfaction paid ; but it is impossible from the Nature of Things that a finite Cause should produce infinite Effects, and therefore the Sinner must have recourse to what Christ has done and suffer'd as Mediator, which is properly call'd a *Satisfaction* : By which, not that precisely which is in the Obligation to the Creditor, is perform'd, but something *equivalent* (or of equal Value) which

which the Creditor in strict Justice is not oblig'd to accept, and therefore in Satisfaction, some Moderation of Right † or Grace is required, by which strict Justice is not urg'd. †*† The

† Epeceia Juris.

†*† “ The Law of Works (says Professor Haliburton) by an Act of Sovereignty was relax'd, not as to its Obligation simply, but in so far as it respected Man himself as the Subject of the Obligation to doing or suffering, nor was the Law simply relax'd as it oblig'd Man, even elect Sinners to do or obey; but in so far as it oblig'd them to obey in order to Exemption from the Curse, and a Title to Life.” *vid a mod. enq. p. 3*

“----- *Nexa copul sequitur nisi accedat indulgentia judicis, si ergo ista pena non infligatur ipsi reo, sed in alium quempiam transferatur. et si judex solutionem istam ab alicuiusquam quam non tenetur admittere, sed ex rigore juris recusare potest, in gratiam rei acceptat et admittit, nonne recte eo sensu & Satisfactionem a vade recipere, & simul penam peccatori, & reo remittere dicetur, --- Ut hic habeamus semel & simul legis Impletionem & Relaxationem, opus gratie & justitiae, Solutionem debiti & ejus Condonationem, lex impletur poena licet facta, sed relaxatur quia non solvit is qui debebat, sed alius, --- vid dispu. Profesoris Turret, de satisfac. Christi p. 226.*

Doctor Bates observes respecting the Satisfaction of Christ, “ that God is to be considered as a Governour who may, by pure Jurisdiction, dispense with the Execution of the Law upon those Considerations which fully answer the Ends of Government. The Law is not executed according to the Letter of it, for then no Sinner can be saved; but repenting
“ Believers

The Satisfaction of our Lord may be therefore describ'd thus, *viz.* That it is that mediatorial Act of Christ, whereby being put in the Room of elect Sinners he offer'd

“ Believers are free from Condemnation. Nor is it a-
 “ brogated, for then no Obligation remains as to the
 “ Duty or Penalty of it; But Men are still bound to
 “ obey it, and impenitent Infidels are still under the
 “ Curse: *The Wrath of God abides upon them.* But
 “ 'tis relax'd as to the Punishment by the merciful Con-
 “ descension of the Law-giver.

“ Some Laws are not capable of Relaxation in their
 “ own Nature; because there is included moral Ini-
 “ quity in the Relaxation. As the Commands to love
 “ God and obey Conscience, can never loose their
 “ binding Force. 'Tis a universal Rule that suffers
 “ no Exception, God cannot deny himself; therefore
 “ he can never allow Sin that directly opposes
 “ the Perfections of his Nature. Besides some Laws
 “ cannot be relax'd *ex hypothesi*, upon the Account
 “ of the Divine Decree which makes them Irrevocable,
 “ as that all who die in their Impenitency shall be
 “ damned. Now there was no express Sign annex'd
 “ to the Sanction of the original Law, to inti-
 “ mate that it should be unalterable as to the Letter
 “ of it. The Threatning declar'd the Desert of Sin
 “ in the Offender, and the Right of punishing in the
 “ Superior; but 'tis so to be understood as not to
 “ frustrate the Power of the Law-giver to relax the
 “ Punishment upon wise and just Reasons. *vid. Harm.*
 p. 147. 148.

To those that have been mention'd, did not the Fear of Prolivity forbid, I might add the concurring Suffrage of many more great Names, such as Dr. *Van Mastricht* Mr. *How*, Dr. *Edwards*, Mr. *Clarkson*, &c.

offer'd a Ransom to God equivalent to their Guilt, and so purchas'd Reconciliation to God for them.

Here observe that three Things are necessary to make Satisfaction, viz. The Innocency of the Person satisfying ; his voluntary Substitution in the Room and Place of others ; and a sufficient Price of Redemption equivalent to the Guilt of Sin.

The Person satisfying must be Innocent, for he that is under personal Guilt has need to satisfy for his own, and therefore cannot satisfy for anothers Sins, now our Lord was bely harmless, undefil'd, the immaculate Lamb of God. †

There must be also a voluntary Substitution in the Room and Place of the Guilty, that so the Person satisfying may represent them and endure Penalties due to them. This Substitution (or standing in the Place of others) was prefigur'd by all the Jewish Sacrifices, and especially by the Scape-Goat. †* Moreover our Lord is call'd in Scripture our Surety, †† who as all acknowledge, is substituted in the Room

† Heb. vii. 26. 1 Pet. i. 19. †* Lev. xvi. 20, 21, 22. †† Heb. vii. 22.

Room of the principal Debtor to the Creditor. Thus JESUS in the eternal Covenant of Redemption consented that his Soul should be made a Sacrifice for Sin. *†* In Consequence whereof, the Father is said in the New-Testament to make him Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him: † And likewise the Son is said to give his Life a Ransom for many; †¶ the Original Word signifies a Ransom-price. †† Moreover our Lord is said to have bore our Sicknesses, and to be made a Curse for us; ¶¶ to have laid down his Life for his Sheep, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring them to God; ¶† to have born our Sins in his Body on the Tree; † (i. e. the Punishment due for them) and, to be deliver'd for our Offences. * All which Places of Scripture, and many more of the like Kind, do plainly prove that the Mediator stood in the Room and Place of the Elect.

Another

† Isa. liii. 10. † 2 Cor. v. 21. †¶ Mat. xx. 28.
 †† Antilutron 1 Tim. ii. 6. ¶¶ Mat. viii. 17. Gal. iii. 13.
 ¶† John x. 15. 1. Pet. iii. 18. † 1 Pet. ii. 24.
 * Rom. iv. 25.

Another thing necessary in *Satisfaction*, is a sufficient *Price* of Redemption equivalent to the Demerit of Sin ; this the sacred Scriptures do also frequently ascribe to the Mediation of Christ : Hence we are said to be bought with a Price, † and to have Redemption thro' his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace. † Yea Christ is said to have redeem'd us (perfectly) from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us : * And elsewhere we are told, that he entred once into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us : †† And by one Offering perfected forever them that are sanctify'd : ¶ And he himself declared upon the Cross, that it is finished. †† i. e. all was compleated by his Obedience and Sufferings that was necessary to satisfy divine Justice and purchase eternal Happiness for his People.

But in order to understand this important Point, it will be necessary to enquire, what is

† 1 Cor. vi. 20. † Col. i. 14. * Gal iii. 13. *Exegese-
rasen.* †† Heb. ix. 12. ¶ Heb. x. 14. †† John xix. 30.

is the Ransom Christ has paid, and wherein appears its *equivalency* to the demerit of Sin?

Now the Ransom Christ has offered, was not the *essential Sanctity* or Righteousness of his divine *Nature*, for this could neither be offered or accepted for our Guilt, this he had from Eternity, but the Scriptures speak of a Ransom in Time; neither could that Righteousness be made any way ours, unless we became *God* and were united to him, either *essentially*, as the Persons of the Trinity among themselves are one in Essence, which is impossible in it self and blasphemous to imagine, or *personally* as the human and divine Nature are united in the Person of Christ, which is also absurd and blasphemous; for there is (but) *one God and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.* † And truly if the Righteousness of the divine Nature cou'd be made ours, (which is impossible) it wou'd destroy the Necessity of that Righteousness, which was purchased by the Life and Death of our dearest Lord, because being *infinite*, it would be alone sufficient.

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Nor

† 1 Tim. ii. 5.

Nor is the *Ransom* the great Redeemer paid, the *original* and inherent *Righteousness* of his *human Nature*, because that was necessary in the Person of the Mediator, as a previous (or foregoing) Qualification, in order to his making of Satisfaction: The Priest that was to offer for us, must of Necessity be *holy and harmless, one that knew no Sin, and was a Stranger to Guile and Deceit.* * The inherent Righteousness of our Lord, may more properly be call'd, the Righteousness of his *Person* than of his *Merit*.

But positively, the Ransom paid by Christ to divine Justice, consists in the *Obedience* he perform'd to the Law of God as Mediator, and in the Sufferings which he endured for the Sins of the Elect in their Room and Place; and hence he is said, *to be made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* And we are expressly said to be *redeem'd by his precious Blood and Death:* † And assur'd that

* 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 22. † Ephes. i. 7. Rom. v. 10.

that by the Obedience of one, many are made Righteous. ††

Now that the Ransom our Lord offered was equivalent to the Demerit of Sin appears thus: The Guilt of all the Elect could be no more than infinite, for more cannot be in the Nature of Things; now the Price that Christ paid could not be less, if it be considered, that it was not corruptible Things, such as Silver and Gold, but the precious Blood of the spotless Lamb of God, (yea) of the only begotten Son of God, yea my Brethren of God himself. † i. e. of a Person who was truly and really God-Man. Add to to this, that our Lord suffer'd in the most perfect Manner, both willingly and patiently: In the Volumn of thy Book, (said he) it is written of me: Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God, and thy Law is within my Heart. † He was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is Dumb, so he opened not his Mouth. † He not only endured Severities from Men in Name and Body, but which was infinitely

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finitely

†† Rom. v. 19. † Act. xx. 28 Act's viii. 32. † Psal. xl. 7, 8.

26. *The Nature of*
initely more, he trod the Wine-Press of his
Father's Wrath alone, and of the People
there was none with him. ¶ This passive
Obedience of Christ answers in Substance to,
or is an equivalent for the Law's Penalty
threatned against Transgressors.

And the *active Obedience* of Christ to the
Law, by which *he fulfill'd all Righteous-*
*ness, ** answers the Law's *Precept*, or is an
Equivalent for our want of that perfect
Obedience which the Law requires; it was
necessary that *as Sin had reign'd to Death,*
so Grace should Reign by Righteousness to
eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
†† A *Dignity of Meriting* belong'd to the
Obedience of Christ on account of the Per-
fection of the Work and infinite Excellen-
cy of the Worker.

By performing without Defect the pre-
cept of the Law, he acquired a Right to
that Reward which is promis'd to the
Obedient. ‡

And the Person obeying, being infinite
in Excellency and Glory, not only merited

a

¶ Isa. lxiii. 3.
‡ Lev. xviii. 5.

* Mat. iii. 15.

†† Rom. v. 21.

a. Freedom from Evil, but a Right to all Kinds of Good.

The Merit of our Lord don't spring wholly from any *Covenant*, as the Merit of our first Parents did.

Nor meerly from a Kind of *Congruity*, from which, without any Debt or Promise, the Almighty does sometimes confer an outward Reward in Consequence of the good Works of the unregenerate; † hence it is said, after a Relation of the Kindness of the *Egyptian* Midwives to the *Israelitish* Women, *therefore God dealt kindly with them.* ††

But Christ's Merit arises also from the *condignity* of his Obedience, inasmuch as not only a divine Person, one in the Form of God and equal to him obey'd, but the Obedience it self considered, as proceeding from God-Man was not due; the Law only obliges Men to Obedience, not GOD-MAN; the Law oblig'd the Guilty to suffer, but not the Innocent.

It is well observ'd by Doctor *Ridgley*,
' That the Satisfaction demanded by the
" Justice

† i. e. materially Good. †† Ex i. 20.

Justice of God, for the Expiation of Sin, must contain in it two Things: Namely
1st, It must be of infinite Value, otherwise it would not be sufficient to compensate for the Injuries offered to the divine Name by Sin, which is objectively infinite. And

2dly: 'That it must bear some Similitude or Resemblance as to the *Matter* of it, to that Debt which was due from those for whom it was given. Here we must consider, that the Debt due from us was two-fold.

1st: 'A Debt of sinless Obedience, whereby the Glory of God's Sovereignty may be secur'd, and the Honour of his Law maintain'd:' This Debt is still justly demanded, because we have lost the Power of performing it thro' our own Default.

2dly, 'A Debt of Punishment proportioned to the Demerit of Sin, as the Result of the condemning Sentence of the Law, which threatned Death for every *Transgression and Disobedience.*' †

Now

† *Vid. Doct. Ridg. Body of Div. Vol. 1. p. 425, 6.*

Now the Satisfaction Christ has made, has these Ingredients; the Person satisfying, was and is of infinite *Dignity*, which cannot but derive an infinite *Value* on his Performances and Sufferings as a Surety; and what he did and suffered did bear some Similitude to the Debt we ow'd, as to the *Matter* or *Substance* of it: e. g. He perfectly obey'd in our Place the Precept of the Law and endured the Penalty of Death. As to natural or *temporal Death*, he bore it strictly and properly, as well as some Resemblance of a *spiritual Death*, in his being Deserted by his Father, and in Consequence thereof, enduring his Father's Vengeance in a Degree to us incomprehensible, which his *Groans*, his *bloody Sweat* in the Garden and *Out-cry* on the Cross sufficiently Evidence! And altho' our Lord did not endure *eternal Death* in respect of *Duration*, which Doubtless must be the Design of the Threatning as it respected fall'n Man: Yet as Doctor *Ridgely* observes, ' The infinite Value of Christ's Sufferings, did compensate for their not
' being

' being Eternal.' † And it ought also to be considered, that the eternal Duration of Death, " Does not belong to the Essence of Punishment, but results from the Condition of the Punished, when they are such that they cannot pay the Debt another Way.' ‡

From all which Considerations complexly considered, it appears that the Obedience of Christ was of infinite Value, and therefore an equivalent Satisfaction to Justice for the Sins of those he represented: And seeing that the active and passive Obedience of Christ, was not due from him to the Law, considered as *God-Man*, it might be therefore imputed to others.

But because this Point of the *Satisfaction* of Christ, is of infinite Moment in the Christian Religion, I wou'd therefore offer the following Hints before I proceed farther, in Confirmation and Illustration of it.

Natural Reason instructs us that there is a God, from whom all Things are deriv'd, and by whom they are govern'd.

This

† Page 453. ‡ *Vid. Profess Van Maastricht Theolog. Theoret. Prac. p. 682.*

Justification opened.

This supreme Being having made intelligent Creatures capable of moral Homage, it was but reasonable that he should give them a Law to direct them in it, especially seeing they cou'd not know such Precepts as took their Rise from his absolute Sovereignty, (which deserves Honour, as well as his other Attributes) without some Intimations from himself.

A Law being given, it's highly reasonable that Obedience to it should be enforc'd by Penalties equal to the Transgressions thereof.

Now seeing by every Violation of the Law, the infinite Majesty of the Legislator is affronted, and infinite Obligations to serve him, which the Creature is laid under, by reason of the essential Excellency and communicative Goodness of God are broken, therefore an infinite Guilt is contracted by every Sin.

This Guilt, the Judge and Legislator, because of his natural Holiness, his governing Wisdom, Truth and Justice, cannot pass by without an equal Satisfaction.

But this the Sinner cannot perform, because he is finite, and therefore either he

must suffer eternally, or a Surety undertake for him, and do and suffer in his Room and Place, what he was and is uncapable of.

Now the Person that so interposes must be *Man*, that he might be capable of suffering, for the Deity is impassible ; and it is but just and reasonable that the Nature that sinn'd shou'd suffer, that the Sin of Man should be punish'd in Man.

And indeed it is as necessary, that the Person interposing be *God*, that so the human Nature shou'd be Supported under its Sufferings, which being equal to the Demerit of Sin, and consequently infinite, wou'd otherways destroy it. It is also necessary, that the Mediator should be God, that so an infinite Dignity might be put upon the Sufferings and Obedience of his human Nature by its Union to the Divine, that so the Satisfaction made might be Equivalent to the Debt contracted.

Now there is no God-Man but our *JESUS* ; it remains therefore, that he is the only Mediator, who by performing the *Righteousness of the Law*, hath purchas'd
for

for the Elect a Freedom from the Guilt of Sin, and a Right to eternal Happiness. This Right purchas'd for the Elect by their Surety, 'twas previously concerted in the Covenant of Redemption, should be apply'd to them in Time by Faith. † It must be confess'd that the Father and the Son who devis'd the Scheme of the Sinners Happiness, without their Council or Consent, had a Right to determine the Time when, and the Order in which an actual Right to it should be confer'd. I may add, that the Son's offering not the proper Payment in *Specie* in all Circumstances which the Law requir'd, gives farther Light and Force to this Argument; not to say that it is reasonable to suppose, that the Order should be such as does consist with the Holiness of God and Wisdom of his Government, which is not like to be answered, unless Faith be considered as the Instrument of a Sinners Justification before God.

The Right purchas'd for the Elect is kept in the Hand of the Mediator, until

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the

† Zech. vi 13. Ps xl. 7. Isa. liii. Isa. xlii. 6. Isa. xlix. 8, 9. Isa. l. 5, 6. Tit. xii. 2 Tim. i. 9.

44 *The Nature of*
the Time for their actual *Investiture*
appointed by the Decree of God, and
agreed on in the Covenant of Redempti-
on, comes. †

Then is the elect Sinner arraign'd by
Justice for the Violation of the Law, which
Charge being true the Sinners Mouth is
shut, and all his Pleas are silenc'd: But
Christ the Faithful Advocate interceeds
with the Father, and urges that the Claim
of Right he bought by Blood for them, be
now communicated to them, and they ab-
solv'd. †

The Advocates Plea is immediately ac-
cepted, and Order given that the Sinner be
put in actual Possession of the Priviledges
purchas'd for him.

To this End therefore the Holy Spirit
forms Faith in the elect Sinner, and ena-
bles him thereby to accept the Redeemer.

Hereupon immediately God, as a Judge,
acquits him from Guilt, declares him
Righteous, and receives him into Favour,
only on the Account of the Righteousness
of Christ imputed to him.

This

This Brief Representation of the Manner of a Sinners Justification, which I have given, is grounded on that Train of Scriptures which assert Justification to be by Faith, and is particularly agreeable to and hinted by those Places of sacred Scripture, that speak of Christ's *being first delivered for us and (then) given to us, and with him all Things*; †† and that it is *given us in behalf of Christ to believe*: ¶ Here it is intimated that Faith is confer'd on the Elect, as what is of right due, on Account of Christ's purchase. And hence we are said, to *receive Faith at the First thro' the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* †. Add to this the continual Intercession of Christ in Heaven, and it fully proves the labouring Point. † To what purpose is his Advocate-ship, but to procure the Application of the Benefits he has purchas'd to those he represented at the Time and in the Order prefix'd?

I may add that it is also in Substance agreeable to the harmonious Sentiments of the

†† Rom. viii. 32. ¶ Paul. i. 29. † 2 Pet. i. 1. † Heb. vii. 25.

the reform'd Protestant Churches in their Confessions of Faith.

Having spoken something concerning the *Term Justification*, together with its *Allusion to Civil Courts*, and *Mode*, I shall proceed to offer a brief *Gloss* upon the venerable *Westminster Assembly's Description* of its *Nature*, which is as follows, *viz. Justification is an Act of God's Free Grace, whereby he pardoneth all our Sins and accepteth us as Righteous in his Sight, only for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and receiv'd by Faith alone.*

Now there are these following Particulars contain'd in the aforesaid Description which deserve our Notice, *viz.*

First, The *Author of Justification*, and that is *G O D*. This the Apostle positively asserts in his Epistle to the *Romans* in the following Words, *It is God that justifieth †* It is against God that Sin is committed, and therefore none can forgive it authoritatively but him. † *Jehovah* alone is Judge of all the Earth, and Author of that Law
by

† Rom. viii. 33. † Mark ii. 7.

by which Man is to be rul'd, and according to which Judgment must pass; and therefore it is only he that can acquit from the Violations of it, and judicially declare Persons to be Righteous: Without this in our Favour our justifying ourselves,* or others justifying us, will be to no avail. ††

Secondly, The General Nature of *Justification*; an *Act*, the General Assembly call it so, and not a *Work* as I conceive for two Reasons:

1st. To prove that the Change produc'd by it is only *relative* of the State, and not *real* or inward of the Temper and Dispositions of the Soul. We come into the World in our fallen State, under a twofold melancholy Disorder, viz. *Moral* and *Penal*, *i. e.* we are not only under the Power and Pollution of Sin, but likewise under the Guilt of it, or expos'd by it to Condemnation. Now Sanctification cures the former, and Justification the latter. Supposing a Person was condemn'd to die for Rebellion, and at the same Time labour'd under bodily Diseases, such as the Leprosie and Consumption, you know the removing
of

of the Sentence of Condemnation would not heal the Diseases ; a proper Application must be made to them of a suitable Medicine besides the other, otherwise the Person would still be miserable.

2dly. Another Reason is to signify that the Sentence of Justification passes upon the Sinner at once ; when he believes, in a Moment his State is alter'd he is no more *under the Law*, (i. e. as a Covenant of Works) but *under Grace*. ¶ *There is therefore now, no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit.* † Here observe that in the Apostles Judgment the Elect, before a vital Union to Christ, are under Condemnation, but being united to him by Faith they are freed from it entirely and at once ; seeing Justification respects the Person he must be either wholly justified or condemn'd, there is no Medium. There are, no doubt, various Degrees of our Perswasion of this Matter respecting ourselves ; but that does not alter the Case at all, for ye know my Brethren that there is a vast
Difference

Difference between the Knowledge of a Thing and the Thing itself.

From what has been said it appears, that Justification is *no immanent Act* of God, for all such are Eternal; nor are they distinct from God himself; but the Act of Justification is at the Time of believing and not before, and has an Effect without him; it terminates on the Sinner, and makes a relative Change respecting his State.

Neither does the Notion of an *immanent Act* answer the End of Justification, which is to free the Sinner from Law Charges, whereby he was before impleaded, and therefore we may safely assert, that Justification, as it proceeds from God, and alters the State of the Person upon whom it terminates, is a *transient Act*. But,

Thirdly, Another particular in the Assembly's Description is, the *impulsive* or *first moving Cause* of Justification, and that is *Free-Grace*. The Fountain from which the Act of Justification flows is pure Grace, this the Apostle asserts in his Epistle to the *Romans* in the following Words, *being justified*

freed freely by his Grace. ¶ The first Wheel that sets all the rest in Motion is the unmerited unexcited Kindness of God, or *the Good Pleasure of his Will.* † Justification is an important Priviledge which all are by Nature equally unworthy of, and equally unable to acquire or requite; and yet it is conferr'd on some, which manifests the Glory of Sovereign Grace, and shews us that God *hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy.* †† We are all by Nature like Children lying in the open Field in our Blood and Polution; in the most ruinous and expos'd Circumstances; and yet even then the gracious God has Compassion on the Elect, and says to them *Live.* ¶†

Fourthly: The next Particular in the aforesaid Description, respects the *Parts* or *Branches* of *Justification*, which are these two, *viz.* Pardon and Acceptance.

Now *Pardon* is properly a cancelling, or dissolving the Sinners Obligation to suffer Punishment, by vertue of the Threatning of the Law against Transgressors. Pardon *supposes* (1st,) a Law given for the Govern-
ment

¶ Rom. iii. 24. † Eph. i. 5. †† Rom. ix. 18.
¶ Ezek. xvi. 6.

ment of Mankind, and that recommended by Sanctions or the Threatning of Punishments against Delinquents, &c. without this it wou'd be but an Advice, and no Law, properly speaking. (2dly,) It supposes a Breach or Transgression of the Law, which the Apostle *John* calls *Sin*. † (3dly) It supposes an Obligation to suffer Punishment for Sin, arising from the Sanction of the Law. ‡ On the other Hand, Pardon *implies* the Removal, not of the *intrinsic Evil* or *Desert* of Sin, for that always remains vile and deserves Punishment, but only of the aforesaid Obligation to suffer it by reason of the Law; tho' *there be no Condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus*,* yet there is something condemnable in them, and hence the Psalmist pronounces a Blessing upon those *whose Iniquity is forgiven, and whose Sin is covered*. ¶

When a Person is Justify'd, all his Sins past are actually pardon'd, and a Remedy is given in the Righteousness of Christ against Sins to come; which before they are par-

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don'd

† 1 John iii. 4.
¶ Psalm xxxii. 1.

‡ Rom. vii. 6.

* Rom. viii. 1

don'd must be lamented, and the Righteousness of Christ apply'd, by the renew'd Exercise of Faith. *I acknowledged, (said the Psalmist) my Transgressions unto thee, and thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin. †* And hence we are instructed in the Pattern of Prayer our Lord has given us, to *pray daily for the Remission of Sins. ‡* Sins not committed, cannot be forgiven actually; where no Guilt is, it cannot be taken away.

Altho' Justification be properly of the Law-State of the Person and unalterable, * to that the Partaker of it shall never by Sin come under the Condemnation of the Law, as a Covenant of Works, being under another Dispensation, *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, having made him free from the Law of Sin and Death. ¶*

Yet the Dispensation of Grace under which the Believer is, has also its Sanctions; and hence its call'd, *the Law of Christ. ††* Jehovah hereby requires *Obedience of his People,*

† Psalm xxxii. v. ‡ Mat. vi. 11, 12. * Rom. viii. 34, 35 ¶ Rom. viii. 2. †† Rom. vi. 2.

People, ¶¶ and threatens to chastise their Iniquities *with Rods*; †† and assures them *that he is provok'd with their Impieties.* ‡‡ Now this exposedness of the justify'd Person to the Corrections of the Almighty, both outward and inward, is a Kind of *Guilt*, which may justly excite an awful *Fear of God*, * and is not to be remov'd without the Exercise of Repentance and Faith.

But to proceed: The other Part or Branch of Justification, is God's accepting of us as Righteous in his Sight; and hence the believing Elect are said *to be made Accepted in the Beloved*; ¶ Jehovah first accepts their *Persons*, and then their *Performances*; and hence he is said, *to have had a Respect to Abel and to his Offering.* † Tho' the Almighty does not find in us such an inherent Righteousness as the Law requires, yet on the Account of the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, which is equal to the Demands of the Law, he autho-

¶¶ 1 Thes. iv. 1,---3. †† Psalm lxxxix 30,---33.
 ‡‡ Psalm lxxxv. 4. Deut. i. 37. * Psalm cxix. 120.
 ¶ Ephes. ii. 6. † Gen iv, 4.

authoritatively Declares us Righteous as a Judge ; and therefore in this respect, *he beholds not Iniquity in Jacob, and Perverseness in Israel.* Now by this judicial Declaration, the believing Elect are entitled to Happiness ; and therefore it is represented, *as a Crown of Righteousness given by the righteous Judge.* † This leads me to a

Fifth Particular contain'd in the Assembly's Description ; and that is the *meritorious Cause, or Matter* of our *Justification*, which is the *Righteousness of Christ, viz. Of his Life and Death.* That this is equal to the Demands of the Law and Justice, and therefore a sufficient Foundation for Justification, I have before shewn, and therefore for the Sake of Brevity, must only add, an Instructive Answer of the Reverend and Ingenious Mr. *David Clarkson*, to an Objection of some, against the Necessity of the Imputation of Christ's *active Obedience*, because of the suppos'd Sufficiency of his *passive* without it, to free
from

† 2 Tim. vi. 8.

from Punishment, and procure a Title to Happiness. To this Objection, he replies in the following Manner: “ Indeed we
“ should not separate what the Lord hath
“ not disjoyn’d: The Obedience and Sufferings of Christ are not disjoyn’d in themselves; in their Virtue or Effects.
“ Not in themselves: He suffered in all his Obedience, and obeyed in all his Sufferings.—There was Obedience in all his Sufferings, because he suffered in Compliance with his Father’s Will: And there was sufferings in all his Obedience, because his Acts of Obedience, were Acts of Humiliation and Abasement, all perform’d by the Son of God in the Form of a Servant.

“ Nor in their Virtue: His Obedience was both meritorious and satisfactory; and his Sufferings were both satisfactory and meritorious. His Obedience was not only meritorious, but also satisfactory; if not as Obedience, yet as it was Penal.

“ And his Sufferings were not only satisfactory, but also meritorious; if not

“ as.

“ as they were great, yet as they were
 “ obediential.

“ Nor in their Effects : His Sufferings
 “ could not have satisfied Justice, without
 “ his perfect Obedience. Because Suffer-
 “ ings, simply considered, without Obe-
 “ dience, find no Acceptance with God ;
 “ his perfect Obedience could not have
 “ procur'd for us a Title to Life ; for this
 “ we could not have, unless freed from
 “ Condemnation by his Sufferings.” †

I proceed to enquire how Christ's
 Righteousness becomes ours ?

Now this the Assembly observes is done
 two Ways, *viz.* by *Imputation* and *Faith*.
 And

First : God imputes the Righteousness of
 Christ to the believing Elect : By *imput-*
ing, we understand God's reckoning, or
 placing to our Account, what was done and
 suffered by Christ as a Surety in our Room
 and Place, as much as tho' we had done
 and suffered these Things in our own Per-
 sons. This the sacred Scriptures assert,
 while

while they signify *the Blessedness of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works*; † and declare that *Christ was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* ‡ And elsewhere he is call'd, *the Lord our Righteousness,* * and *the End of the Law for Righteousness, to every one that Believeth.* ¶ And we are farther told, *that as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of One, shall many be made Righteous.* †† *i. e.* when they believe.

Surely if ever Man be Justify'd, he must have a Righteousness to justify him equal to the Demands of the Law; *the Judge of all the Earth must needs do right,* and therefore cannot pronounce those Just that are not so; in that Degree the Law requires, either *inherently* or *imputatively*, the Sanctions of the first Covenant, because of the Justice and Truth of God establishing them must be fulfill'd; hence our Lord himself assures us, *that till Heaven and Earth pass,*

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one

† Rom. iv. 6. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 21. * Jer. xxxiii. 16. ¶ Rom. x. iv. †† Rom. v. 19.

58 *The Nature of
one jot or one Tittle shall in no ways pass
from the Law, till all be fulfilled. ††*

Now there is no Righteousness but that of the blessed Jesus, that can answer the Law's Demands. The Law requires perfect and perpetual Obedience, and threatens Death for the least Defect. † But we have all sinn'd and come short of the Glory of God. * There is not a just Man on Earth that doeth good and sinneth not. ¶ If we say we are perfect, our Mouth shall prove us perverse. † If we say we have no Sin, we are Lyars and the Truth is not in us. ¶¶

So that without another Righteousness besides our own, we cannot be sav'd. Now the Righteousness of Christ cannot be made ours any other Way than by *Imputation*; his individual Righteousness cannot be infus'd into us, individual Actions and Passions terminate in the Subject of them. I may add, that the aforesaid Imputation is sufficient to our Justification appears thus, viz.

First:

†† Mat. v. 18. † Gal. iii. 10. * Rom. iii. 23. ¶
Eccles. vii. 20. † Job ix. 20. ¶¶ 1 John i. 8.

First : The Covenant of Works tho' it made no mention of a Surety, yet it did not exclude one, in case there ever should be a Necessity.

Secondly : The active and passive Obedience of Christ as a Surety, answer'd the Law's Precept and Sanction ; yea *magnified it and made it honourable*, and so gave room for the Display of those divine Perfections, which were engag'd to issue the Threats of the first Covenant ; and thus God may be *Just, and yet the Justifier of him that believes in Jesus*, † and declare his Righteousness in the Remission of Sins that are past thro' Christ's Propitiation.

Thirdly : The Almighty having in infinite Condescension provided a Surety and accepted of his Satisfaction under that Character, as appears by his Release from the Prison of the Grave, and triumphant Ascension to the Seat of the Blessed. *He was taken from Prison and from Judgment, delivered for our Offences and raised again for our Justification* ; God
H 2 *manifest*

† Rom. iii. 26.

manifest in the Flesh and justified in the Spirit; i. e. openly acquitted, as his Peoples Representative, by his Resurrection from the Dead, which was perform'd thro' the holy Spirit's Agency. As Mediator he offered a Sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling Savour. The Apostle lays great Stress upon the Resurrection of Christ, while he assur'd the Corinthians, that if Christ be not raised their Faith was vain, and they were yet in their Sins: The Reason is this: The Lord Jesus being Arrested by Justice as the Surety of the Elect, in order to pay the Debt they ow'd; if he had continued under the Arrest, it wou'd have prov'd his Insolvency, or Inability to perform his Engagements; but having pay'd the Debt, or finished his Purchase, God hath raised him up, having loosed the Pains of Death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it. Now I say, the Father having accepted what our Lord did and suffered as a Surety, it is but reasonable that he should impute what he did and suffered to those whom he represented, at the Time and in the Manner
prefixed

prefix'd by his Purpose. Which brings me to speak upon the

Second Way by which the Righteousness of Christ becomes ours, and that is *Faith*; 'It is received by Faith alone.' say the Assembly.

When a Person believes, he has a right to conclude that he is Justified, and to claim all the Privileges that issue from it, and not before. This is what we Term Justification by Faith, which therefore cannot be before Faith; for that which conveys a Claim of Right, must it self necessarily exist before the Claim conveyed by it.

The sacred Scriptures frequently represent Justification to be by Faith; thus it is said in the Epistle of *Paul* to the *Galatians*, the Scriptures foreseeing, that God would Justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preach'd before the Gospel unto Abraham. † And elsewhere it is said, seeing it is one God who SHALL Justify the Circumcision by Faith, and the Uncircumcision through Faith. *

Now

† Gal. iii. 8.

* Rom. iii. 30.

Now it was not written for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it SHALL be imputed, if we believe on him. † There are many other Places of Scripture of the like Tendency, the Words of which I have not Time to mention. † And therefore proceed to observe, That the Nature of that Faith by which we are Justify'd is well represented by, *receiving Christ.* * This not being capable of a *natural*, must needs be taken in a *moral* Sense, and as such considered, it *supposes*

1st: A firm *assent* of the *Mind* to the Declarations of the Gospel, respecting Christ's Person and Offices, *viz.* That he is *God-Man*, every Way able and willing to save the Sinners, that take their Flight to him, from all the Evils and Miseries they labour under; ¶ *and that he is cloath-ed with Authority by his Father for this purpose. ††*

2^{dly}. It *supposes* the *Judgment's* high *Aprobation*

† Rom. iv. 23, 24. † Rom. iii. 22--28. Gal. iii. 24: and v. 5. Eph. iii. 12,----17. Phil. iii. 9.. Gal. ii. 20. and iii. 22. Rom. i. ii. 25. Gal. iii. 14. * John i. 12. ¶ Heb. vii. 25. †† John vi. 27.

Aprobation of Christ, particularly in the
aforesaid respects.

3dly. It *supposes* an entire *renouncing* of
all other *Refuges* as insufficient to satisfy
divine *Justice*; and save them from *Sin* and
Ruin. †

2dly. It *implies* the *Wills consent* to
accept of Christ as the *Gospel* offers him,
viz. *Deliberately* after having counted the
Cost, † *freely* as the *Gift* of *God*, **
and *fully* in his *Person*, *Offices* and *Rela-*
tions, together with his *Law* and *Cross*. ††

2dly. It *implies* an *entire Dependance* on
him for *Justification* and *Salvation*. †*

3dly. It *implies* a *sweet Complacence* in
him, and the *Way* of *Justification* thro'
his *Righteousness* alone, without any *Mix-*
ture of ours as a *Concause*. The *humbled*
Sinner is *willing* to *resign* himself to *Christ's*
Guidance and *Government*, to *lean* alone
upon his *Merit* for *Acceptance*, and to
ascribe to him all the *Glory* of its *Happi-*
ness, this *Gospel* *Method* of *Salvation* it
is *pleas'd* with, and *heartily acquiesces*
in. *†

Now

† Phil. iii. 8, 9. † Luke xiv. 28. ** Isa. !v. 1. Joh. iii. 16. ††
Mat. xvi. 24. †* Phil. iii. 8, 9. *† Mat. v. 15. Cant. v. 16.

Now Brethren the Faith that I have mention'd, as it is preceded with a distressing Sense of Sin and Danger, such as excites to the most anxious enquiries and the most earnest Use of all appointed Means for relief, * So it is followed with good Effects upon the Heart and Practice: The governing Temper of the former is heavenly, and the general Tenor of the latter is Holy. † That Faith which is the Instrument of Justification *purifies* and *humbles* the Heart, ‡ *overcomes the World*, and *works by Love*. ¶

Now we are justified by Faith not consider'd as a Work, for then we should be justified by Works, but as a Mean or Instrument apprehending the Person and applying the Righteousness of Christ to us. There is no worth in Faith to merit our Justification, when a Beggar stretches out his Hand to receive a Purse of Gold, it is not the Hand but the Gold receiv'd by it that enriches him: And it should be farther observed that Faith is the Gift of
 God

* Acts ii. 37. Rom. viii. 15. † Phil. vi. 20. Rom. vi. 14. ‡ Acts xv. 9. ¶ Gal. v. 6. & John v. 4.

God †* wrought in us by his Almighty Power, †† which we cannot exercise without the renewed Influencies of the holy Spirit. * Observe farther, that it is Faith alone that receives the Righteousness of Christ to the Justification of a Sinner, Faith indeed is not alone in the Person justified, no, by no Means ! For Faith being a Part of the new Creature, all the other Train of Graces included therein must needs be connected with it. Justification and Sanctification, tho' they be really distinguish'd, yet are never separated : ¶ That Man that is justified before God has really the Principles of Sanctification in himself.

But tho' Faith be not alone in the justified, yet it justifies alone, (instrumentally) And hence the Righteousness apprehended by it is call'd the Righteousness of Faith, ‡ not the Righteousness of Repentance, Love or any other Grace.

It has pleas'd God to employ the Grace of Faith in the Business of Justification rather than any other Grace ; because of its

I

Fitness

†* Ephes. ii. 8. †† Ephes. i. 19, * Cant. i. 4 ¶ 1.
Cor. vi. 11. ‡ Rom. iv. 13.

fitness for this Office: The Eye is employed in seeing, the Ear in hearing, and not the Foot, because of their Fitness for such Functions. Thus seeing we are justified not by giving to God any thing that we do, but by receiving from God what Christ has done for us: Faith being the only receiving Grace, is therefore only fit for this Office, the other Graces have their Exercise and Use in order to Salvation, * but do nothing towards our putting on the Robe of Christ's Righteousness. Faith humbles the Creature and sets the Crown upon the Head of Christ: This the Apostle's Query proves in his Epistle to the *Romans*, when speaking of Free Justification before God he enquires, *where is boasting then, it is excluded, by what Law, of Works, nay but by the Law of Faith.* But to illustrate this Matter a little further let it be observ'd, that our actual Union or Relation to Christ is the Ground of our actual Right to his Benefits: And hence we are told, that *he that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life: † And that*
Christ

* Luke xiii. 3. † 1 John v. 12.

Christ Jesus is made of God Righteousness to us as are in him: †† And that the Elect are made accepted in the beloved. **

The Marriage Relation of the Wife to the Husband is Doubtless the Ground of her Joint Interest in his Estate: Communion is founded in Union, being united to or made one with Christ, we have Communion in his Benefits.

Now Faith is (upon our Part) the Bond of the aforesaid Union. And hence it is represented in Scripture by coming to Christ, * receiving of him, † leaning upon him, † as well as by eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood: †† And those that want Faith are represented in Common, be they Elect or not Elect, as in a State of Distance, of Death, of Wrath. Hence it is that the Blessed Jesus lamented the Case and Course of the unbelieving Jews, that they would not come unto him that they might have Life. †† And Paul declares in his Epistle

†† 1 Cor. i. 30. ** Ephes. i. 6. * Mat. xi. 28.
† John i. 12. † Cant. viii. 5. †† John vi. 56. ††
John v. 40 Ephes. ii. iii. 12, 13 But now in Christ
Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the
Blood of CHRIST.

to the *Ephesians* concerning some converted elect Persons, *that they WERE by Nature Children of Wrath even as others, i. e.* before Faith Wrath was their Inheritance, or belong'd to them by Right, or according to Law and Justice as well as to the non Elect: But now since they were quickned the Case was altered, their State was chang'd. Faith therefore justifies as it unites to Christ, for as our natural Union to the first *Adam* is the Ground of our Condemnation, so our spiritual or mystical Union to the Second, is the Ground of our Justification.

What has been said is Doubtless intended by the *Westminster* Assembly, when they tell us “*That Faith only receives the Righteousness of CHRIST.*” *i. e.* In Contradistinction from every other Grace in us, and all the Works of Holiness and Righteousness done by us.

The Representation which the Church of *England* give of Justification in the *sixteenth* Article, is exactly agreeable to that of the *Westminster* Assembly, which I have explained and is as follows, *viz.*
 “We are accounted Righteous before God,
 “ only

“ only for the Merit of our Lord and Sa-
“ viour JESUS CHRIST by Faith, and not
“ for our own Works or Deservings.
“ Wherefore that we are justified by Faith
“ only, is a most wholesome Doctrine and
“ very full of Comfort, as more largely is
“ exprefs'd in the Homily of Justification.”

This leads me to the

II. General Head, which was to prove,
*that Justification is without the Works of
the Law.*

Now this is not only expressly asserted
in the Words of our Text, but likewise in
other Places of Scripture: † To which let
me add the following Arguments, *viz.*

First. The Law requires a Perfection of
Obedience in order to Justification by it,
and denounces a *Curse* upon those that
want it. † Now seeing we are destitute
of that perfect and inherent Righteousness,
in Habit and Act which the Law requires;
* it is impossible we should be justified by
it; neither will it avail to reply that the
aforesaid Perfection was necessary under the
Law,

† Rom. iii. 28. Rom. v. 1. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. iii. 11,
24. † Gal. iii. 10. * Rom. iii. 12, --- 18.

Law, but not under the Gospel; for the *Relaxation* made under the Gospel is not that an imperfect Righteousness shou'd be accepted for a perfect one; for thus the Justice of God would be wrong'd: Neither is it consistent with the Truth of God to declare those Righteous, that are not perfectly so, either *inherently* or by *Imputation*. But the *Relaxation* made under the Gospel, consists in accepting of the Righteousness of the Surety, in the Room of that which the Law required of the Sinner personally.

Secondly. We have broken the Law, and cannot make Reparation equal to the Offence, and less than this, divine Justice will not accept. Our after Obedience, upon the Supposition it was perfect, (which in the mean time cannot be reasonably expected from imperfect Creatures) wou'd not make Satisfaction for our past Disobedience; the Reason of which is this: We are under a double Debt to God, *viz.* Of *Duty* and *Penalty*; as *Creatures*, we owe the former to God's *Law*, and as *Transgressors* we owe the latter to his *Justice*; now the Payment of the one, cannot discharge the other, which

which is of a different Kind. Let me add, that the Penalty threatned, being equal to the Demerit of Sin, † is such as we can't endure without being eternally miserable. *

Thirdly, We can't be justify'd by Works, because that Works done before Faith are not pleasing to God, but full of Sin; and so soon as Faith is given, it immediately receives Christ, and so we are Justified before we perform Works that are spiritually Good. ‡ And hence the Almighty is said to *Justify the Ungodly*: † *i. e.* Such as have never done any acceptable Service to God. The Church of *England* speak excellently upon this Point, in the 13th Article, which is as follows: “ Works done
“ before the Grace of Christ and the In-
“ spiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant
“ to God, for as much as they spring not
“ of Faith in Jesus Christ; neither do
“ they make Men meet to receive Grace,
“ or

† Rom. vi. 23. * Because the Sufferings of a finite Creature, cannot be infinite in Degree or Value, they must be infinite in Duration. ‡ Rom. viii. 7, 8. †† Rom. iv. 5.

“ (or as the School Authors say,) de-
 “ serve Grace of congruity : Yea ra-
 “ ther for that they are not done as
 “ God hath willed and commanded them
 “ to be done, we doubt not but they have
 “ the Nature of Sin.”

Fourthly, We cannot be Justified by Works, because then the Reward wou'd be reckon'd of Debt and not of Grace ; † but the Reward is of Grace, and hence the Man is describ'd as *blessed, to whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works* : † And if of Grace, it is no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works then it is no more Grace : Otherwise Work is no more Work. ¶ To be justified freely, (which the Word Grace signifies) without any Regard to our Works, as Causes thereof either in Part or in whole, and to be justify'd partly or wholly by Works, are absolute and unreconcilable Inconsistencies.

Fifthly. Seeing the Righteousness of CHRIST is perfect and of infinite Value,
 equal

† Rom. iv. 4. † Rom. iv. 6. ¶ Rom. xi. 5, 6.

equal to the Demands of the Law and Justice, as has been before prov'd, then there is no need of adding ours to it with Design to purchase in Part our Justification before God : And truly this Notion is Injurious to the Honour of CHRIST as Mediator, for it interpretatively says, that his Satisfaction is incompleat ; and if the Case were so, surely ours could never compleat it, because it is at least imperfect. * And thus no Flesh could be saved.

6thly. We cannot be justified by Works, because that thus Man would have Cause of boasting, which the Apostle assures us is excluded, *Not by the Law of Works but by the Law of Faith.* † It tends to puff up the Pride and Vanity of the Creature to imagine that there is any Merit in his Works. And how unreasonable is the Supposition, that we should merit Good from God by returning to him what is his own ?

7thly. It is reasonable to conclude, that we are justifi'd in the same Manner that

K *Abraham*

* Isa. lxiv. 6. † Rom. iii. 27.

Abraham the Father of the Faithful was. Now this was by Faith, for says the Apostle, *If Abraham were justified by Works, he hath whereof to Glory*: But he denies that he had Cause of glorying before God, and therefore he was not justified by Works; *No he believed God and it was imputed to him for Righteousness.* † In the mean Time, as the Apostle *James* observes, this Faith of *Abraham* by which he was justified, was a living Operative Principle which evidenced its Reality by good Works, that flow'd from it as Streams from a Fountain.

8thly. Our Righteousness answers not the Demands of the Gospel no more than of the Law, and so falls short of every Rule of Righteousness. The Gospel requires Perfection as well as the Law, to imagine the Contrary is in other Words to say, either that the Imperfections of Believers are no Sins, or that the Gospel allows of Sin, both which are equally absurd.!

It is true the Gospel promises the Pardon of Imperfections to believers on the Exercise of Faith and Repentance, which
the

† Rom. iv. 2. 3.

the Law does not, yet in the mean Time it obliges to the Contrary, and therefore cannot accept of that as a Righteousness for Justification, which falls short of its own Demand, unless it be supposed to declare those Righteous which, according to its own Prescriptions, are not so, and this would be to assert what is false in Fact: He that is Imperfect is Guilty, then surely the *Righteous God will by no means quit such*, except they have another Righteousness than their own to screen them from divine Vengeance.

Surely as the Prophet expresses it, *we are all as an unclean Thing, and all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags.* ** We have lost our Original Integrity, and in the Room thereof contracted the vilest Pollution and Depravity, which has spread thro' all our Powers, and consequently mingles with and taints every Principle and Spring of Action, and makes them of a base Alay. †† This Sentiment had much Impression upon the Heart of *Job*, as appears by the following strong Lines of his, *If I*

K 2

wash

** Isa. lxiv 6. †† Isa. i. 56.

wash my self with Snow Water, and make my Hands never so clean, yet shalt thou Plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Cloaths shall abhor me. ¶ Behold I am vile what shall I answer thee? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth. ¶ I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor my self and repent in Dust and Ashes. ** And if our inherent Righteousness be thus Defective, it will necessarily follow that so are all the Acts that proceed from it, the Streams cannot, in the Nature of Things, be better than the Fountain from which they proceed: And hence the Wise Man assures us, that *there is not a just Man upon Earth that doeth Good and sinneth not. †** The Apostle Paul laments the Principle of Corruption that was in him in the Language of Agony and bitter Passion! *O wretched Man that I am!* and freely confesses that he was thereby hindered from doing the Good that he would, and led (in some Instances an unwilling) *Captive to the Evil he would not,*

¶ Job. ix. 30, 31. ¶* Job. xl. 4. * Job. xlii. 5. 6.
†* Eccl. vii. 20.

not. †* And James likewise asserts that
in many Things we offend all. ** Now
how can such a Righteousness answer ei-
ther the Demands of the Law or Gospel ?
“ A Man (says Bishop Hopkins) might
“ more reasonably expect to buy Stars with
“ Counters, or to purchase a Kingdom
“ with two Mites, than to think to pur-
“ chase the heavenly Kingdom, by paying
“ down his own Duties and good Works
“ which are no Ways profitable to God,
“ and bear no more Proportion to the In-
“ finite Glory of Heaven than a single Cy-
“ pher to the numberless Sands of the
“ Sea!” †

Not to add, that if any Righteousness
of ours was the Matter or Cause of our
Justification before God, the Covenant of
Grace would be unhing'd, and a Covenant
of Works put in the Room of it. Pray
what was the Reason why the Covenant of
Nature was call'd a Covenant of Works?
But because Man's Righteousness and O-
bedience was therein to be the Ground and
Reason of his Acceptance.

To

'To assert that there is more Grace in the new Covenant than in the Old, will not alter the Case, so long as the Condition of both is supposed to be the same, because that more or less in Degree does not alter the Kind. And hence we may conclude, that the Notion of Justification by Works, either in whole or in Part, subverts the Gospel of Christ, and pretends to lay another *Foundation* for Mans Happiness than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ; for this supposes that not the pure Grace of God and the Righteousness of Christ, is the Cause why one differs from another as to the State of his Soul, but Mens Virtue and Goodness. The Apostle therefore charges those that Preach such Doctrine as *perverters* of the *Gospel* of Christ, as *Preachers* of *another Gospel*, and denounces a Curse upon them in his Epistle to the *Galatians*. * And elsewhere he declares, *that Israel that followed after the Law of Righteousness, did not attain to the Law of Righteousness, (and that for this Reason) because they sought it not by Faith, but as*
it

* Gal. i. 6, 7, 8, 9,

it were by the Deeds of the Law; i. e. The Carnal Jews sought after Justification, partly on the Account of their own Works, and not as the Free-Gift of God; and therefore did not attain it: † And in the following Chapter he farther confirms this by saying, that some of the Jews had a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge, for they being Ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God, † i. e. The Graceless Jews, not having an affecting Apprehension of the Necessity and Sufficiency of the Righteousness of the Mediator to their Justification, which was of God's finding out and Acceptance, but endeavouring in the Room thereof to establish their own Virtue or Goodness as a Ground of Pardon, they did not become Subjects to the Mediators Righteousness, but proudly rebell'd against the Way of Salvation by it. This Gloss the Emphasis of the original Word will justify. †† I proceed

‡ Rom. ix. 31. 32. † Rom. x. 2, 3. †† Hupetagesan. See also Gal. ii. 21. --- If Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in Vain. And Rom. iv. 14. For

I proceed now to the Improvement, in which I must be but very brief. And

First :

if they which are of the Law be Heirs, Faith is made Void, and the Promise made of none Effect. i. e. If Persons do in any Degree obtain a Right to Impunity and Life for their Obedience to the Law either Ceremonial or Moral; then there was no need of Christ's Death to Compaſs that which might be otherwise adjusted, and ſo Chriſt has died in Vain. Neither would there be any need upon ſuch a Plan of going to Chriſt by Faith for what we are ſuppoſed to have in ourſelves, or any need of the Promiſes of Pardon thro' him. What need is there of a Saviour to do that for us which we can do for ourſelves, if Men can do a little that ſhall in any Degree recommend them to the Favour of God: By the ſame Rule, through greater Application, they may do more, and conſequently all, and ſo Chriſt is rejected and the Foundation of the Goſpel overthrowed, Faith and the Promiſes rendered Vain and to no Purpoſe: Dreadful Thought! This the Apoſtle farther confirms, Gal. v. 4. Chriſt is become of no Effect unto you, whoſoever of you is juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace, i. e. Such as ſeek Juſtification by or for their Obedience to the Law do reject Chriſt and renounce the Grace of God offer'd by the Goſpel, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is of no avail to them, Rom. xi. 6. And if by Grace it is no more of Works: Otherwiſe Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works then it is no more Grace: Otherwiſe Work is no more Work, i. e. The ſuppoſ'd Merit of Good Works and the Free-Grace of God cannot be blended together as Cauſes of our effectual Vocation, no in that Senſe, they exclude and deſtroy each other: For whatſoever is of Grace cometh freely and not of Debt, but what cometh by the Merit of Works (or Promiſe

for

First: What has been said serves to refute the false Notions of the *Papists*, who blend Justification and Sanctification together; of the *Socinians*, who deny the Satisfaction of Christ; of the *Arminians*, who deny his Substitution in the Place of Sinners; and mix Works with his Righteousness as the Cause of a Sinners Justification before God; of the *Neonomians*, who imagine that a new Law is made which accepts of less than perfect Righteousness, or perfect Satisfaction, for the Sinners Justification before God; and of the *Antinomians*, who imagine that the Elect are justified before Faith, either from Eternity, or at least from the Time of Christ's Death.

Seeing that the Ransom which Christ offered to divine Justice, was not proper Payment in all Circumstances, then it necessarily follows, that God pardons freely:

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We

for Works which is the same) cometh by Debt. Now Debt and no Debt, or what is free and what is by desert, are contrary Things, and therefore Works and Grace can be no more reconcil'd consider'd as Causes of our Justification than Fire and Water, Light and Darkness, Life and Death: Grace must loose its Nature if it be by Works together with it, and Works must loose their Nature if it be by Grace together with them.

We are not only beholden to Christ for Satisfying, but to God the Father for Accepting thereof! *Merit is Love*, without Peer or Parallel!

And it likewise naturally and necessarily follows from the same Principle, that none hath or can have, any actual Interest in, or Benefit by Redemption, 'till they comply with the Terms prescribed by the Father and Son, seeing the injured Lawgiver was at liberty to accept of Satisfaction or *not*, he hath of Necessity the Right to prescribe his own Terms, when and how he will admit the Sinner to an actual Claim to the Benefits of it. And surely, the Mediator is engag'd with equal Tenderness, to promote the Interests of both Parties, seeing he possess'd the Nature of both, and therefore must needs concur, that the Application of his Satisfaction be made in such a way as is consistent with the Honour of God, his Law and Government, which End cannot be attain'd without establishing Faith as the Mean of it, and urging Holiness as the Way to Happiness.

It is true, a *Surety* in a *strict Sense*, only represents the Debtor and binds his Indemnity, and when he pays the pecuniary Debt in kind, the Bond is cancell'd. But our Lord is a *Surety* only in a *large Sense*, for he is a *Mediator* as well as a *Surety*, a Friend to both Parties, engag'd by Nature and Office, to seek the Honour and Interest of both; besides what he paid as before observ'd, was an *Equivalent*, and this in Consequence of an Agreement with the Father, respecting the Plan of Man's Happiness, which was surely *well ordered in all Things*.

Our Case God-ward, my Brethren, is not properly that of *Debtors*, but that of *Criminal-Subjects*, and God's Aspect, towards us, not *strictly* that of a *Creditor*, but that of a *Rector* and *Judge*; and therefore the Part Christ acted, was not in a strict Sense that of a *Surety*, paying the very Debt in Kind, in every Circumstance, and so Discharging the Bond, but that of a *Mediator*, expiating our Guilt by Satisfaction.

This rightly understood, saps the Founda-

dation of the *Antinomian Delusion*, concerning eternal Justification. To which I may add, that if the Person must first be charg'd with Guilt before he be Justify'd, as has been before prov'd, then eternal Justification must fall to the Ground. If it be suppos'd, that Sin is charg'd as well as discharg'd from Eternity; it may be reply'd, that then Men wou'd be condemn'd and Justify'd at once, because there is no prior or posterior in Eternity, which is an unreconcilable Contradiction.

The Wit of Man can never reconcile the Notion of *eternal Justification* with the Doctrine of *original Sin*, the Current of the *Scriptures*, the *Convictions* of the *Holy Spirit* before Conversion, the *Necessity* of *Faith*, *Repentance* and *Holiness*. If it be suppos'd that any were Justify'd from Eternity, they have lost it by the Fall of *Adam*, and so need a new Justification: We have not only the infallible *Testimony* of the *sacred Scriptures* without us, that before Faith we are *Guilty before God*, and *under Condemnation*; but such as are convinc'd of Sin, have the *Witness* of *God's Spirit* within them

them, to the same Truth: And hence the Spirit of God is call'd, a *Spirit of Bondage to fear*. The Notion of *eternal Justification*, destroys the absolute Necessity of *Faith, Repentance* and *Holiness*; for according to it, upon the Supposition an Elect Person went on in a Course of the grossest Impieties, such as Murder, Uncleanness and Robbery till Death, and never believ'd or repented, the Almighty wou'd have no more to charge against such a Person, than against the Angels that never sin'd! It tends to make Sin of the most crimson Kind, appear to be but a meer Trifle unworthy of our Fear or Sorrow, and so to banish all Holiness from the Earth, yea and to eradicate all Civil Society!

Objection 1st. Christ was a publick Person, and as such Justified.

Answer. What then, as none are guilty of *Adams* Sin actually, until they exist and partake of the same Nature; so none are actually Justify'd, till by Faith they are united to the second Adam.

Obect. 2d. God's Nature is unchangeable

ble and his Love eternal, and therefore the Elect were Justify'd from Eternity.

Ans. I deny the Consequence ; tho' God is not Changeable, we are ; and there is a manifest Difference between the Purposes of God and the Execution of them ; Altho' God did from Eternity purpose to create the World, yet it was not created till Time began ; and this being done according to God's Purpose, makes no Change in God. As to the Love of God, the usual Distinction of Divines concerning it is just, *viz.* that of *Benevolence* and *Complacence* ; the former signifies God's gracious Purpose from Eternity, of conferring special Good upon the Elect in Time. † The latter intends, the actual conferring of the Good design'd, together with the Suitableness of the State and prevailing Temper of the Elect to the approbative Will of God ; on which Account he is represented as *taking Delight in them when converted.* ¶ Now it is only in the former Sense that God is said to love the Elect before Conversion. Besides

† John iii. 16.

¶ Cant. ii. 14.

sides it should be considered, that God's Love is no Passion in him, as Love is in us, and therefore only intends the Posture of his Will towards the Object, either in Respect of *Purpose* before Time, or *Approbation* in Time, agreeable to his Purpose before it. Neither is there any Inconsistency in this, that an Elect Person upon whom God intends to confer special Good in Time, should be, in Respect of his present State, expos'd to the Condemnation of the Law before the Good design'd be confer'd; for God's Purpose does not alter the State, till it be put in Execution; and this is what orthodox Divines intend by God's *Love* and *Hatred*, respecting the Elect before Conversion:

Object. 3d. Things to come are present with God, one Day is with him as a Thousand Years.

Ans. Things to come are not present with God actually, but only in respect of his Knowledge and Purpose respecting their Futurity. If Things to come were actually present with God, then these Absurdities will unavoidably follow, *viz.* That all Things

Things are Eternal, and that they are and are not at the same Time and in the same Sense! Besides the same Rule wou'd hold as to Things past, and then we must say concerning the World, that it is still a Creating in the Sight of God, and that the Flood now covers it, and that the People of *Israel* are passing thro' the *Red Sea*: Who sees not that this is ridiculous? Surely *Jehovah* looks not on Things in a false Light. What wild Work wou'd it be, if we shou'd form our Prayers according to the aforesaid Scheme? For thus we must now pray for the Protection of *Adam* in Paradise, of *Noah* in the Flood, and of *Lot* in *Sodom*.

Object. 4th. Justification by Faith, is but a Manifestation of Justification.

Ans. But how can this be? Surely it is not so in Relation to God, for *known to him are all his Works from the Beginning*. And as to others, it is not Faith alone that makes our Justification manifest to them, but principally good Works that flow from it, as the Apostle *James* observes. ¶ Nor can it

it be justly understood, of the Manifestation of Justification to our selves, for then all that believe would know that they are Justified at all Times, which is contrary to the express Declaration of God's Word, that assures us, that *such as fear God and obey the Voice of his Servant, do sometimes walk in Darkness and see no Light.* † Again the Scripture excludes our own inherent Righteousness and Works, from any Agency in that Justification which is by Faith: But to say that all the Graces of the Spirit and Duties of Gospel Obedience, are excluded from being of any Use in the Manifestation of our Justification, is to contradict both Scripture and Reason; *hereby, (says the Apostle John.) we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* ‡ To suppose that the Apostle should take so much Pains to state the true Notion of Justification, and to defend it against the carnal Jews and false Teachers, and mean no more than a Manifestation which we might be sav'd without, and which is as uncertain as the Wind, is most Ridiculous!

M

To

To certify us of our Good State, is not the Design of the first Act of Faith, but of after Acts ; and hence the Apostle observes concerning the *Ephesians*, *that after they believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise.*

If Faith only gave us the comfortable Knowledge of our State, then it would alter our Frame but not our State ; but the Scriptures declare the Contrary, while they inform us, that hereby we obtain *a Right to become the Sons of God.*

Object. 5th. The sacred Scriptures represent, *that God was reconciling the World to himself, not imputing their Trespases to them : † And that Christ has made Peace thro' the Blood of his Cross : ¶ And that the Grace of God in Christ was given us before the World began.*

Ans. The aforesaid Places of Scripture, can consistently with the Current of Scripture, the Analogy or *Proportion of Faith*, and Dictates of right Reason, be supposed to mean no more than these Things following :

† 2 Cor. v. 19.

¶ Col. i. 20.

lowing : (1st.) That there was a gracious Purpose of God from Eternity, to vouchsafe Blessings on the Elect in time. (2^{dly}.) That there was a sufficient Foundation laid in the Covenant of Redemption, as well as in the Sufferings and Obedience of Christ in pursuance of it, for the purchasing and securing the actual Reconciliation of the Elect in time. (3^{dly}.) That there was and is a Sufficiency of Grace treasur'd up in Christ as the Head of his Church and Fountain of Influence, to be communicated to the Elect upon their Closure with him ; which in some Places of Scripture, is represented by the *Time past*, to shew the Certainty of the Event : For the same Reason, the Coming of our Lord to Judgment, is represented by the Apostle *John* as *present*, tho' it be *future* : *Behold he cometh with the Clouds !*

It's well observ'd by Professor *Haliburton*,
' That upon Christ's yielding the Satisfac-
' tion demanded, there did result a Right
' for the Elect, to Freedom from the Curse,
' and to all the Benefits of his Purchase :
' This Right is not what the Lawyers call,

Jus in re, but *Jus ad rem*. 'Tis more properly said, there is a Right for them, then that they have a Right; since they know not of it, it is not actionable by them, nor is it actually Vested in their Persons, yet with God it is righteous, that they for whom Justice is satisfy'd, a Price paid, Redemption purchas'd, &c. shou'd at the Time and in the Order agreed on, be put in actual Possession of those Privileges.'

To say that the Elect are Justified from Eternity, is in effect to say, that nothing sin'd from all Eternity, and that nothing was Justified, which is absurd! For the Elect before they Exist, are nothing in respect of actual Sin.

If it be Objected that what has been said, will oppose the Decrees: I Answer, no not at all! For the Decree considers future Beings and future Actions, † but Justification respects Persons present, or existing, and Actions past, and hence God is said, to *Justify the Ungodly*. ‡ But can a Person be

† Ephes. i. 4.

‡ Rom. iv. 5.

be actually Ungodly before he has a Being? The Almighty decreed from all Eternity to glorify as well as justify the Elect, are they therefore actually Glorify'd from Eternity? If it be said that there was more than a Decree, *viz.* Christ's Engagement, as a Surety to redeem the Elect. *Ans.* What then, so there was a Covenant Engagement between the Father and Son, that Christ should be made a Curse for his People in Time: And was he therefore actually made a Curse from all Eternity? No surely!

To assert the Elect are actually justify'd and actually condemn'd at the same Time, is as gross a Contradiction as to say that Light is Darkness, and Darkness is Light, it is impossible in the Nature of Things; Such as are actually justify'd are actually freed from Condemnation, and therefore can't at the same Time be actually under it. But I must conclude these polemical Hints, and proceed to mention a

Second Inference from what has been before said, and that is *the comfortable State of Believers.* Who these are I have before shewn, by explaining the Nature of Faith, which

which I advise the Reader to examine himself by.

Now such as do find in themselves the Characters of Faith have Reason to rejoyce under the most gloomy Aspects of Providence: For however Men may condemn them God will not, *there is no Condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit.**

And we may likewise learn the Necessity and Excellency of Faith thro' which alone we can be justified, and that the Greatness of Sin is no Bar to believing, seeing the Righteousness of Christ is able to make the most Crimson Sins white as Snow; and that it is freely offer'd to all Believers.

To conclude, justified Persons should be exceeding humble, seeing that *boasting is excluded by the Law of Faith*, and Holy also in all Manner of Conversation, evidencing thereby their Justification to the World about them. I conclude in the Words of the Apostle Paul to Titus, *That being justified by his Grace we should be made Heirs*

* Rom. viii. 1.

Ju,ification opened.

95

Heirs, according to the Hope of eternal Life. This is a faithful saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believ'd in God, might be careful to maintain good Works : These Things are good and profitable unto Men. †

† Tit. iii. 7, 8.



Vindicae Legis:

OR, THE
LAW established by FAITH.

THREE
SERMONS,

PREACH'D AT

PHILADELPHIA,

February the 24th, and March the 10th,
1744-5.

ON ROMANS III. 31.

By GILBERT TENNENT, A. M.

Minister of the Gospel in *Philadelphia.*

Rom. vii. 12. *Wherefore the Law is holy ;
and the Commandment holy, and just, and
good.*

John xiv. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Com-
mandments.*

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ROMANS III. 31.

Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid: Yea we establish the Law.

A JUST View of the Harmony that subsists between the Law and Gospel, is of great Importance in the Christian Religion: To promote this, is therefore the Design of our present Meditations, to which the Text I have chosen directly leads.

To understand which let it be considered, that the Apostle *Paul* having in the preceding Verses of this Chapter, prov'd at large by a Train of close Reasoning, that the Justification of a Sinner before God is by Faith only. Foreseeing that some wou'd be tempted to abuse that precious Doctrine of Grace to the Contempt of the Law; in order to prevent this vile Abuse, he proleptically States the Objection of such by way of Query or Interrogation, and rejects it with a vehement Negation,

gation, or with great abhorrence! *Do we then make void the Law by Faith?* The Objection more fully Stated is this: 'The
' Apostles by their Doctrine of Justificati-
' on by Faith, make the Law unprofitable,
' useless, vain; they abolish and abrogate
' it, and destroy all Obligation to obey it.'

The Apostle replies with a *God forbid!* As if he should say, I abhor the Thought! That so valuable and excellent a Rule of Life should be made void! O dreadful, detestable Suggestion! This Objection is the same in Substance with the slanderous Report which some spread concerning the Doctrines of Grace, which the Apostles preach'd, affirming that '*they said, let us do Evil that Good may come.*' This Calumny Paul rejects with equal Detestation, in the following Words, *whose Damnation is just*: * *i. e.* Sayeth Poole, 'Their Dam-
' nation is just, who teach such Doctrine
' and Practice accordingly; or they justly
' deserve Damnation, who calumniate the
' Apostles and publishers of the Gospel,
' and

* See Verse 8 of Rom. iii. Chap.

‘ and raise false Reports and Slanders of
‘ them :---- Who affirm we say or hold,
‘ *that Evil may be done that Good may come*
‘ *thereof.*’ * Now seeing the abolishing
the Moral Law as a Rule of Action, tends
to destroy all Holiness entirely, (as I shall
afterwards labour to make evident) it must
needs be a great Evil; and if this be done
that Good may come, it is in Substance
what the Apostle rejects with so much
Warmth in the preceeding Part of this
Chapter!

It is the Moral Law that the Apostle
here Discourses of, for in this Chapter he
shews that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are un-
der Sin by breaking of it: Now the *Gen-
tiles* were not under the ceremonial Law,
and so could not transgress it, and there-
fore it must needs be the Moral Law that
is intended in our Text.

Besides it is certain that the Gospel Dif-
pensation of Faith, does make void the
ceremonial Law; when the Substance came
the Shadows fled away, the Types must
needs

* *Vide Poole's Annotations in Locum.*

needs give Place to the Antitype, that *Hand-writing of Ordinances was nail'd to the Cross of Christ.* But in what Sense does the Apostle oppose making void the Moral Law?

I answer, not as a Covenant of Works; for himself elsewhere shews, that it is in that Respect made void to Believers, and asserts, that *they are not under the Law but under Grace.* ¶ Since Man's Apostacy, the Law cannot give Life as a Covenant thro' our Default, forasmuch as it requires a Perfection of Obedience to that Purpose, which we have rendered ourselves unable to perform. It is therefore the Destruction of the Moral Law as a *Rule of Life*, or its Obligation to Obedience under that Character, which the Apostle opposes.

To make this the more easy to be understood, let it be considered, that a Law in general may be thus describ'd, *viz.* That it is a Rule of Duty, or of Things to be done and avoided, prescrib'd by the Almighty, and enforced by the Threatning of Punishment upon the Transgressor.

Now

Now there are two Kinds of Laws, namely, *positive* and *moral*: The former take their Rise entirely from the Legislator's Pleasure, and enjoyn Things that are not essentially or intrinsically Good in their own Nature, antecedent to the Command; and are therefore Good only because commanded, and Evil because forbid: Of this Kind was the primitive Prohibition, of abstaining from the Fruit of a certain Tree, which before, was no doubt, lawful to be eaten: of this Kind was also the ceremonious Observances of the *Jewish* Church, and likewise their judicial or political Laws, at least such of them as were peculiarly adapted to the State of the *Jewish* Nation: These Commands are alterable because they are not grounded on the intrinsic Goodness and Reasonableness of Things, but upon the Legislator's Pleasure.

But the latter, *viz. moral* Precepts, have an essential Equity and Reasonableness in them, they conform us to the Attributes and Actions of God, which are the Pattern of our Imitation; they are exactly adapted to the Frame of Man's Faculties,
and

and to his Condition in the World, and serve to maintain the Primitive Dignity of human Nature, and good of Society, and therefore cannot be altered ; for the Things are enjoyn'd because they are good, and forbidden because they are in themselves Evil.

This Law is call'd *Moral*, to distinguish it from positive and ceremonial Institutions ; and likewise the *Law of Nature*, because it was at first, as to the Substance of it, made Conatural to Man, and, as it were, engraven on the human Soul (or Conscience) when it came at first out of the Hands of God. But Man's understanding being darkned, and his Will and Affections being deprav'd by Sin, there was need of a Second Edition of it for our Direction in Practice ; which God in infinite Condescension gave in two Tables of Stone upon Mount *Sinai*.

This Law does virtually contain in it an Obligation to believe and obey what God should afterwards reveal and enjoin, and therefore all *positive Precepts* of a Divine Original were and are establish'd by the Moral Law, during the Time appointed for their Continuance.

This Law was never given to any since the Fall of Man with Design to obtain Justification before God by Obedience to it, tho' many carnal Persons took it in this Light to their great Prejudice, but *was added* to the Covenant of Grace, *because of Transgressions*, as an Appendix to promote its grand Intention by convincing Sinners and directing Saints, and so it is *not against the Promises of God* but greatly serves them by making *Offences to abound* in the Unregenerate, *i. e.* as to their View of them and by *working Wrath, i. e.* Making them sensible of the Wrath they deserve for Sin, and so disposing them to accept the Redeemer by Faith, and by guiding Believers in the Paths of Purity, and humbling them for their Defects.

And tho' under the Gospel Dispensation, the Church being come to mature Age, Believers are not under so severe a Discipline as obtain'd during the *Jewish* OEconomy, but are freed entirely from the Bondage of the Ceremonial Severities as well as from so frequent an Inculcation of the Terrors of the Moral Law, attended

O

with

with but obscure Discoveries of Gospel Grace, which were necessary to prepare the *Jewish* infant Church to embrace with readiness a brighter and milder Dispensation, and so may be said to be *no longer under the Law as a School-Master* ; yet they need it as a Rule of Practice.

Now the moral Law was given to innocent Man, both as a *Rule of Duty* and a *Covenant of Life*. Man was not only to be directed by it as a *Rule* enforc'd with a Penalty, but it was given also in the form of a *Covenant*, a promise of Happiness being annex'd to Man's perfect Obedience to it, together with the positive Precept before mentioned.

The Moral Law therefore can be suppos'd to be made void, but in two Respects, *viz.* Either as a *Covenant* or as a *Rule*.

Now it cannot be the former Sense that the Apostle opposes, because he in other Places asserts, that Believers are dead to it in that respect, and therefore it must be the latter, for in no other Lights can the moral Law be considered than these.

The Phrase *make void*, signifies to render unprofitable

unprofitable and vain to abolish, antiquate, Abrogate. †

The Apostle farther observes, that instead of *making void the Law* (i. e. as a Rule) *by Faith, we establish it.* The Word *establish* * signifies to make a Thing stand the more firmly, and maintain its Honour: By *Faith* we are to understand by a Metonymy the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, of which the Apostle had been before discoursing, or the Gospel Dispensation in general, so that from the Words of our Text we may gather this Position, viz: *That the Doctrine of Justification by Faith or Gospel Dispensation, instead of making void the moral Law as a Rule of Life, does farther establish it.*

In discoursing upon which I shall,

I. Offer some Considerations tending to manifest that the moral Law as a Rule of Life is not, nor cannot be made void: And

II. Shew how it is establish'd by the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, or Gospel Dispensation

O 2

Dispensation

† Catargumen, *inutilem vel irritum redimus, vel abolemus, antiquamus, abrogamus, vid. Poli. Synop. in Loc.*

* Istomen, *stare facimus, i. e. honorem ei suum defendimus, iuramus. vide Poli Synop in Locum.*

Dispensation, and then proceed to the Improvement.

To confirm and illustrate the first Head of Discourse, I shall only offer the few following Particulars, *viz.*

1st. Man is necessarily under a Law to God, he having received his Being and all his Benefits from him, it is but reasonable that he should return some grateful Homage for them.

Besides as the infinite Excellency of the Supreme Being deserves religious Reverence, so it is but reasonable that it should be offer'd, and especially by Creatures who had received Power adapted to that Design: But how shall this be acceptably perform'd without a Law? Hence we may conclude that the infinitely Wise God, who has made nothing in Vain, has given intelligent Creatures a Rule to direct them in his Service, and this indeed the sacred Scripture assures us of.

2^{dly}. This Law being *Moral*, grounded on the Nature of our Relation to God and one another, must needs be perpetually binding at least as a *Rule*, because it's
Foundation

Foundation is invariable. *viz.* The Nature of God and the Reason of Things : And hence it is that the Moral Law has such honourable Epithets given it in Scripture as these following, *viz.* The *Royal Law*,----*the perfect Law of Liberty*,----*a spiritual Law*,----*yea that it is Holy, Just, and Good*.----*i. e.* It hath an intrinsic and invariable Goodness which changes not with Time ; it is the *Copy* of God's Moral Excellencies ; the pure *Mirror* in which we may behold his amiable and untainted Perfections : The Relation therefore between God and Man, as a Creator and Creature, Governor and Subject, must be extinguish'd, before an Obligation to the Duties which result from it can cease ; God must cease to be God, and Man must cease to be Man before the Obligation of the latter to obey the former expires and terminates. And hence our Lord assures us, *That he came not to destroy (or dissolve *) the Law, but fulfil it, and that till Heaven and Earth pass, not one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled. †* And in our
Text

* Catalusai dissolve it's Obligation as a Rule. † *i. e.* till the Consumation of all Things, or the End of the World

Text the Apostle Paul asserts, *that the Law instead of being made Void by Faith, is thereby establish'd; and elsewhere he informs us, that we are not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ. **

If it be objected that the same Apostle tells us that *the Believer is dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ. †* It may be reply'd, That the Apostle speaks not there of the Law as a *Rule of Duty*; for in that Sense he calls it in the same Chapter *Holy, Just and Good*, but as a *Covenant of Works*: In this Respect all that believe are dead to it, *i. e.* they do not expect Justification on account of their Obedience to its Precepts, *but desire to be found in Christ not having their own Righteousness, which is of the Law, (i. e. not depending upon it for Acceptance with God) but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God through Faith. ¶*

The Apostle likewise considers the Law in the same Sense, *viz.* as a *Covenant of Works*; when he says in another Place,
That

* 1 Cor. ix. 21. † Rom. vii. 4. ¶ Phil. iii. 9.

The Law not made void.

111

That *Believers are not under it*, † else he would not consist with himself,

But it may be again objected, *That the Law is said not to be made for a Righteous Man.* †

I answer with Doctor *Witsius*, “ That
“ there are two Things to be considered
“ in the Law of God, since Sin has had
“ it’s Entrance in the World, viz. A
“ Rule and Direction to Obedience, and
“ a Power of restraining from Disobedi-
“ ence by Terror and Condemnation :
“ When therefore the Apostle teaches, that
“ *the Law is not laid upon a good Man*,
“ he does not Design that, concerning
“ its first and principal Work which is
“ Essential to it, but concerning the other
“ which is Accidental and came by Sin,
“ from which justified Persons are freed
“ by Christ.” * And that which tends to
confirm

† Rom vi. 14. † 1 Tim. i. 9.

* *In lege dei post peccatum duo sunt consideranda, 1. Norma & directio ad hypotagen. 2. Vis frenandi, & compescendi terrore & Metu, ac denique juste Condemnandi. Quando ergo Apostolus docet, legem justo positam non esse non intelligit id de primo ac precipuo legis opere, quod ipsi essentialis est, sed de altero illo accidentario, quod per & post peccatum superaccessit, & a quo justis per Christum Liberati sunt. Wits. O Economy. Lib. 1. Cap. 3. Sect. 9.*

confirm this Gloss, is that the Apostle after the aforesaid Words, immediately makes mention of the grossest Kind of Sinners; Doubtless the Terrors of the Law are of Service to restrain some such in a Measure, otherwise civil Society would be destroy'd. It is certain that Believers are free thro' Christ from the Condemnation of the Law, and that it's principal Use to them is not to affect their fear by its Threats, but to inform their Judgments and direct their Practice by it's Precepts: They are chiefly influenced by the free ingenuous Principle of Love that inclines them to obey the Law of Choice, which the unregenerate are drove to against their Inclination. But some other Interpreters do not without Reason think, " That the Original Word " translated, *made for*, * would have been " better translated, *laid upon*; to signify " that the Holy Law of God is not laid " upon a Righteous Man as a Burthen, " as it is upon the Wicked." Such as fear God *value his Law above the finest Gold, and it is sweeter than Honey to their Taste.* †

None

* *Keitai.* † Psa. xix. 18.

None of God's Commandments are grievous to them. But on the Contrary the Wicked look upon the *Law of Liberty* to be a State of *Bondage*, and Obedience to it a *Weariness*. †

The Sum of the Moral Law, as our Lord observes, is *love to God and our Neighbour*; and can any imagine, that the Law enjoyning this, should not be of perpetual Obligation? Can it be thought, with any Shadow of Reason, that God would destroy, by any succeeding Dispensation, what is so just and Reasonable, and thus deface his own Image? It cannot be!

It is true, the Moral Law was originally given to innocent Man, for two important Purposes, *viz.* As a *Rule* to direct his Obedience, and as a *Covenant* between God and him, by keeping of which, he was to expect, according to the Promise of God, a confirmed State of Blessedness; but on the Contrary, nothing but Misery and Death. * Now as soon as Man broke the Law, it *become weak through the Flesh*: *i. e.*

P

Unable

† Mat. i. 13. * Gen. ii. 17.

Unable to give Life or Justify as a Covenant thro' our Default, † and on the contrary, expos'd to condemnation all the human Race; and hence it's call'd, *a Ministration of Death and Condemnation.* ‡

This all unconverted Sinners are under, not having complied with the Term of the New Covenant, they are under the Curse of the Old: †† And hence it is said to *bold* (or bind) *the Unregenerate*; ** it binds them to Death and Hell. This indeed Believers are delivered from, yet they are under the Law as a *Rule*. But to proceed

III. Almighty God having given a *Law* of inflexible Equity, for the Government of his intelligent Creatures, the Perfections of his Nature were and are engag'd to Support its Honour; particularly his *Wisdom, Holiness, Justice and Truth*.

To destroy a reasonable and Righteous Law, which is expressive of the Beauty of the divine Nature, and adapted to support the *Dignity*, and compass the single and social *Benefit* of the Human, wou'd argue
Weakness

† Rom. viii. 3. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. †† Gal. iii. 10 ** Rom. vii. 6.

The Law not made void. 115

Weakness and Want of *Wisdom*. What is the Law of Nature or the Moral Law? but the Obligation of the rational Creature, to admire, adore, love and obey his Creator, (and to express this by all those positive Duties, which God may from Time to Time by his Sovereignty require,) and for the Sake of his Creator, to love his Brother sincerely, perseveringly, effectually. This Law is so noble and rational, so conducive to promote God's manifestative Glory, as well as our Honour and Benefit, that our Happiness consists in Conformity to it; and therefore it contains the highest Reflection upon God's Wisdom and Goodness, to suppose that he would destroy it, or suffer the Honour of so excellent a Rule of Government to be eclips'd! which it certainly wou'd be by a Satisfaction less than the Demerit of Sin. This famous Mr. *How* has well express'd in the following Lines: 'It were manifestly more honourable and worthy of God, not to have exacted any Recompence at all, than to have accepted in the Name of a Sacrifice, such as were

unproportionable, and beneath the Value
 of what was to be remitted and confer'd;
 for what had been lower, must have been
 infinitely lower: Let any thing be suppos'd
 less than God, and it falls immensely
 short of him; such is the Distance be-
 tween created Being and uncreated, that
 the former is as nothing to the latter; and
 therefore bring the Honour and Majesty
 of the Deity to any thing less than equal
 Value, and you bring it to nothing; and
 this had been quite to loose the Design
 of insisting upon a Recompence, it had
 been to make the Majesty of Heaven
 cheap, and depreciate the Dignity of the
 divine Government, instead of rendring
 it August and Great.* And to make it a
 Maxim of Government, that no Offender
 shou'd be punish'd tho' of the most enor-
 mous Kind, in case he profess'd Penitence,
 wou'd be to render all Sanctions insignifi-
 cant Scare-crows, and of no Moment and
 Validity; or to declare in other Words,
 that there was no great Danger in Sin, and
 that

* *Ibid* op *Dom. Ilu*: Vol. 3. p. 195.

that the Transgressors might easily escape with Impunity, which tends to destroy all Government!

Nor will the untainted *Holiness* of God endure the Destruction or Disparagement of that Law, which is so bright an Expression of its Beauty and Purity, the invariable *Rectitude* of the divine Nature, whereby he is infinitely removed from all Moral Evil which is essential to God, and represented in the sacred Volumn as his peculiar Glory, inclines him to hate and therefore to punish Sin, or a Transgression of his Law as its contrary. The Opposition of God to Sin results from the glorious Purity of his Nature, which therefore he cannot dispense with; and hence he is represented, as of *purser Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; ¶ that *Sin is the abominable Thing that he hates*; * and therefore that *Sinners cannot stand before this holy Lord God*. † Yea we are told by the Prophet, that his *Soul loaths them*; this therefore indispensably requires the perpetual Duration of the
Moral

¶ Heb. i. 13. * Jer. xlv. 4. † Ezra ix. 14 15.

Moral Law, as a Standard or Scale of Action and Rule of Government, as well as equal Reparation made for the Dishonours done to it by Sin.

And can we with Reason suppose, that the inflexible Justice of God, which is essential to his Being, and in its Nature disposes and determines him to give to every one his due, will at the same time incline him to pass by the Transgressions of his Law with Impunity, or pardon them without an equal Reparation: Will not the supreme Lord and Judge of all do right? Has not himself assur'd us, that he will by no means clear the guilty. † Far be it from God, says Eliku, that he should do Wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit Iniquity; for the Work of a Man shall he render unto him, and cause every Man to find according to his Ways, ‡ In the same Strain speak Job and Joshua; If I Sin then thou markest me, and will not acquit me from mine Iniquity. ¶ Ye cannot perjure the Lord, for he is a holy God, he is

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† Ex. xxxiv. 7. ‡ Job xxxiii. 10, 11. ¶ Job x. 14

a jealous God, he will not forgive your Transgressions nor your Sins: i. e. without equal Satisfaction. ** What is the Relative Justice of God, but a Display of his Holiness in the Government of intelligent Beings, whereby he not only prescribes a *Law* as the supreme *Lord*, but executes the *Sanctions* of it, or dispenses Rewards and Punishments as supreme *Judge*? Neither does the Almighty's insisting on Satisfaction, as has been represented, in the least disparage his glorious Sovereignty; for as judicious Mr. *How* observes, ' It hath not been said that God can forego none of his Rights, it's plain he doth when having a Right to punish a Sinner, he by Pardon confers on him a Right to Impunity; but he cannot do it to the Prejudice and Dishonour of his glorious Excellency's, and the Dignity of his Government; and therefore if some Reparation were requisite to his doing it, consistently with the due Honour and Reputation thereof, Justice towards himself

** Josh. xxiv. 19.

' self required, he should insist upon it;
 ' which is no more a Detraction from his
 ' Absoluteness; than that he cannot lye;
 ' or do any thing unworthy of himself; he
 ' is so absolute; that he can do whatever
 ' he pleases, but so just, that he cannot be
 ' pleas'd to do an unrighteous Thing,' †
 Excellent Doctor *Owen* hath offered the
 following Confirmation of what was before
 observ'd: ' What God cannot do in respect
 ' of one divine Attribute, he can do it in
 ' respect of none; or that which cannot be
 ' on account of one essential Property, can-
 ' not be by all.' * The Reason of which
 is so evident; viz. a Necessity of Harmo-
 ny among the divine Attributes, or Jeho-
 vah's Self-consistency, that it need not be
 mention'd.

Again, the inflexible *Truth* of God re-
 quires Satisfaction; the Law being violated
 divine Truth is engag'd to execute the
 Threatning of Death which was denounc'd
 against the Sinner, that thus he may make
 good what he had declar'd to be his Re-
 solution,

† *Vide How* Vol. 1. p. 190 * *Doctor Owen Diatribe*
de just. p. 206.

solution. Jehovah had and still does declare by his Law, that the *Soul that Sinneth shall die*: Now unless this Sentence be executed upon the Sinner or a Surety in his Place, the Truth of God fails. ' There is, (sayeth Doctor *Edwards*) a Disposition in every Legislator, that enclines him to execute Threatnings annex'd to his Law upon Transgressors, without which they wou'd be insignificant.-----These Things (saith he) are to be found in all Laws, and all Lawgivers, whether human or divine, the Reason being the very same, and common to them all.' †

Surely the sacred Rights of divine Government must be inviolably preserv'd, as well as the Honours of divine Justice and Truth, the faithful Guardians of the Law maintain'd,

Can Sin that exposes to the Curse, vacate the Law that denounces it? Can the Creatures Rebellion lessen the Creator's Authority, or Right to his Obedience? Shall the voluntary Iniquities of Worms, make the

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great

† *Vide Edwards Prefat. Part 3. p. 85.*

great Jehovah quit his Throne and renounce his Claim of Right? No surely!

To suppose that the Gospel frees us from the Moral Law as a Rule of Life, is to cast a most dishonourable Reflection upon it, and make it unworthy of our Acceptance: For thus it would militate against right Reason, against all the valuable Interests of Society, against our own Honour, Comfort and Happiness, against the Image of God, yea God himself! It is no Liberty, but base Bondage and Slavery, to be depriv'd of the Law as a Rule; the Law of God, is a Law of Liberty, and it is sweet Freedom to obey it from Faith and Love; but it's vile Slavery to serve Sin and run after the Whims of our deceitful Hearts, wild Imaginations, or the Delusions of the *Devil transform'd into an Angel of Light*. Christ has not come to allow a Liberty to Sin, by his Gospel and Grace, but to *destroy the Works of the Devil*. Pious Doctor *Cotton Mather*, puts the Request of one who holds the licentious Principle I am opposing into the following Language, which naturally flows from it, and serves
to

to beget a Horror of it in all that fear God,
viz. ' Great God I pray thee to allow me
' the Sacrifice of my Saviour, that it may
' defend me from thy Wrath, to which
' my Sin will otherwise expose me, and
' let it excuse me in my Neglect of thy
' Worship and Service, and let me be
' indulg'd now to trample on thy Law,
' to blaspheme thy Name, to assault thy
' Throne, and to do all that thy grand
' Enemy the Devil can tempt me to.
' Language fit for none but the Mouth of
' a Devil; and yet when this Thought is
' working in the Heart, I may make the
' *more bold with Sin, because the Blood of*
' *my Saviour will shelter me from smarting*
' for it: This, this, is the Language of it;
' you cannot imagine that a justifying
' Faith, will commit so enormous a
' Villany! † But I proceed to the

II. Propos'd, which was to shew *how*
the Moral Law is establish'd by the Doc-
trine of Justification by Faith, or Gospel
Dispensation. And

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1st.

† *Vide* Sermon upon the Law establish'd by Faith.

1st. The *Grace* of Faith which is the Instrument of Justification, *establishes* the Moral Law various Ways, *viz.* by its *Antecedent, Nature, Concomitants* and *Effects*.

The *Antecedent* of Faith, namely, *Conviction* of Sin, *establishes* the Law; for by this the Sinner is alarm'd out of his Security, and arraign'd before the *Bar* of the Law, and made to confess the Purity of its Precepts, and Equity of its condemnatory Sentence, together with his Desert thereof by Sin. Convinc'd Sinners know that they are *Guilty before God*, and therefore *their Mouths are shut*, and all their Pleas silenc'd. † Now the Moral Law is the Ordinary Mean of Conviction, for by this is the *Knowledge of Sin*.

Yea the very *Nature* of Faith *establishes* the Law, for what is this but a *receiving* of CHRIST as a KING and LORD as well as a SAVIOUR, * and this cannot be without consenting to obey that Law which is the Rule of his Government. The *Erand* of Faith to CHRIST is certainly for *Holiness*, as well as *Pardon*: Christ has come by
Water

† Rom. iii. 18. * John i. 12.

Water as well as by Blood to deliver from the Tyranny of Sin as well as from the Guilt of it, and as such true Faith receives and desires him, and therefore in its Nature it includes a Regard to the Rule of Holiness the Moral Law : And hence the *Psalmist* valu'd it above the *finest Gold*, and it was *sweeter than Honey* to his Taste, † and declares that *he esteem'd all God's precepts concerning all Things to be Right*, ‡ and admir'd the Extent and Perfection of them. *I have seen* (said he) *an End of all Perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding Broad.* ¶

Again the *Concomitants* of Faith establish the *Law* : Faith is but a Branch of the new Creation, the Nature and Genius of which God himself represents by *writing his Law upon the Heart*, ** which surely signifies the Infusion of a Holy Principle of Action inclining to honour, love and obey the Moral Law : All the Graces infus'd in Regeneration dispose to *Holiness* ; and indeed God himself is *glorious in Holiness.*
Now

† Psa. xix. 10. Psa. cxix. 127. ‡ Psa. cxix. 128.

¶ Psa. cxix. 96. ** Jer. xxxi. 33.

Now Regeneration is but a renewing us after his Image, without Holiness we cannot see God, or ascend his Holy Hill. †† “ Now what is Holiness (as Doctor Mather justly observes) but a continual Concern to have the great God glorified by the Observation of the Law that he has given us ?”

And the Effects of Faith do also establish the Moral Law, a true justifying Faith purifies the Heart, and Works by Love. Well if it purifies the Heart, it must needs dispose to regard the Rule of Purity, and if it Works by Love to God, it must needs produce a Respect to his Image, which is his holy and righteous Law. Can one sincerely love a Person and slight his Picture that is well drawn? And is not Love the fulfilling of the Law? But one remarkable Effect of Faith, which the Prophet *Zachariah* mentions, is to bewail with Bitterness our Breaches of the Law, the Words are these, *And I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of Grace and Supplications, and they shall look on me whom they have pierced,*

†† Heb. xii. 14. Psa. xxiv. 4.

pierced, and mourn for him as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in Bitterness for him, as one that is in Bitterness for his first Born. ¶ Here observe, that mourning for Sin thro' a believing View of a pierced Redeemer, whom we have crucified by it, is a new Covenant Promise: And what is Sin but a Transgression of the Law? Well seeing Faith in a crucified Saviour inclines us to mourn over the Breaches of the Law, it hereby puts great Honour upon it in confessing its Justice, Equity and Obligation. And I cannot but observe likewise under his Head, that the Almighty himself declares, that his writing his Law in the Heart is a Blessing of the New Covenant, after those Days saith the Lord I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People. † And elsewhere walking in God's Law and Statutes, is represented as a Promise of the New Covenant by the Prophet Ezekiel, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and

and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.

¶ Keeping God's Statutes is here likewise represented as a Fruit of Conversion, as appears by comparing the Scripture just now quoted, with the preceding Verse. Again,

2dly. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, or Gospel Dispensation, establishes the Moral Law by *Proposal, Precept, Promise, President, and Gratitude.*

It establishes the Law by proposing a *Righteousness equal to its Precepts and Penalties, viz. The Righteousness of the Mediator God-Man, perform'd in our Nature in Obedience to the Law; And hence he is said to be made of a Woman made under the Law.* Hereby the Law was *magnified and made Honourable*, more than it would have been by the perfect Obedience or endless Sufferings of the whole rational Creation; for by this God himself was, as it were, brought to its *Bar!* Hereby the Equity of the Law's Penalty was solemnly and openly declar'd before Men and Angels: What is the Language of
CHRIST'S

CHRIST'S Sufferings but that the Violation of God's Law is an infinite Evil? Else why did Jesus endure so much for it, and tread the Wine Press of his Fathers Wrath alone? Sacrifices and Offerings could not avail, nor Ten Thousand Rivers of Oyl, nor the yeilding of our first born as Victims to expiate our Guilt, nothing else than the precious Blood of the Son of God could atone for our Crimson Iniquities in violating the Divine Law! Well, if the Transgression of the Law be so great an Evil, the Law itself must needs be Holy and Good; and indeed if it were not so the Blessed God would not stand so much upon the Honour of it, as to make his own beloved co-equal Son endure such intollerable Anguish and Agonies to repair it, as the Evangelists represent! What is the Righteousness of Christ, which Faith relies on for Justification, but Christ's Conformity to the Law, and Sufferings for our Breaches of it? By both which it is honoured, and its Equity and Excellency establish'd!

Moreover the *Gospel Dispensation* call'd the *Law of Faith*, of which Justification

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by

130 *The Law establish'd by Faith.*

by Faith is a principal Branch, *establishes* the *Moral Law* by *Precept*, while it enjoins *us to be Holy in all Manner of Conversation, as he who hath call'd us is holy.* * Now what is this Imitation of God in Holiness but a Conformity to the *Moral Law*, the Rule of Holiness? And hence Christ preach'd the Law, † and urg'd Obedience to it, *but if thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* This was our Lord's Answer to one that ask'd him *what good Thing he should do that he might have eternal Life?* And immediately after our Saviour shews that by the Commands he meant the *Moral Law*, by mentioning some of the Precepts of it. ‡ The Blessed Jesus frequently inculcated the *Moral Law*, and likewise clear'd it from the false Interpretations of the *Pbarisees*; ¶ and Persons are commended in the Gospel for obeying the *Moral Law.* **

And did not the dear Redeemer exactly fulfil it's *Righteousness* and conform to its *Precepts*

* 2 Pet. ii. 11 † Mat. v. Chap. ‡ Mat. xix. 17. 18. ¶ Mat. v. John. xiv. 15. Mat. xxii. 37. 38. 39. ** 1 Pet. ii. 21. Jam. 2. 8.

Precepts? And has he not hereby left us an Example that we should follow his Steps.

The *Dispensation of Faith* does likewise establish the *Law* by promising to assist us in Obedience to it. * When Man had broken the *Law*, and thereby rendered himself unable to obey it to Perfection, an Aversion against it was contracted, and it's Authority slighted: But Faith by proposing Pardon for Imperfections, and promising Assistance, enlivens our Hope, conciliates our Regard, and procures our Obedience. It is a Soul supporting Promise of the New Covenant that *Sin shall not have Dominion over us.* †

Again the *Dispensation of Faith*, or Doctrine of free Justification by it, establishes the *Law* in Point of Gratitude. The pure Grace and Love that God gives his People to partake of by the Gospel, cannot but powerfully constrain them to ingenuous Gratitude to so Blessed a Benefactor! For Love is surely Love's Load-stone, the greater the Love is that is expressed towards us, the more by Consequence must our Love

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* Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 27.

† Rom. vi. 14.

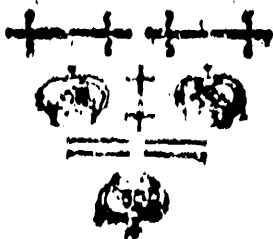
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be inflam'd by it. Now *Love* being the great Source of acceptable Service, the greater the Cause the more noble and abounding will be the Effects! Surely the Language of the Soul on this Occasion, must be like that of the Psalmist, *What shall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Being redeem'd by so great a Price, Gratitude must constrain them to glorify God by their Bodies and Spirits which are his. But how can this be done without Obedience to his Law, and avoiding all that is contrary to it? Surely the dying Love of Christ for the Sins of his People, and the Consideration of their Bodies being Members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Ghost, are powerful Arguments to detest and avoid Sin, and abound in the Duties of Holy Obedience, and these are suggested by the Law of Faith.

Faith, by opening to our View at once the unsearchable Riches of Divine Love, and the dreadful Glories of Divine Justice in the Redeemer's Death, tends to incite our Love and alarm our Fear; and by both, to procure our Obedience to
God's

God's Law and Reverence of his Majesty !
And it likewise raises our Hope by assuring
us *that we shall reap if we faint not in*
our Religious Diligence.

Let what has been said, my dear Brethren, excite you to esteem and value God's Holy Law in your Judgments, and to conform thereto in your Practice, but in the mean Time beware of depending upon your Obedience for Acceptance. Labour with that Earnestness and Steadiness as tho' you could gain Heaven by your Works, and after ye have done all ye can, depend no more upon them than if ye did nothing. On the one Hand, let us avoid the Error of the *Arminians* and *Pe-pists* who depend upon their Works : And on the other, let us with equal Care avoid the *Antinomian* Sloth and Negligence, let us walk in the middle Way between these two Extreams. *May GOD. bless his Word: I add no more at present.*



S E R M O N II.

R O M A N S III. 31.

Do we then make void the Law thro' Faith?
G O D forbid.

HAVING, in a preceeding Discourse, briefly spoken upon what is *express'd* in this Text, I am now to treat upon what is *suppos'd* by it: While the Apostle rejects with so much Abhorrence, the Notion of making void the Law, *it's Dignity and Excellency is hereby necessarily suppos'd*. This therefore is the Point I have at present in view, in discoursing upon which I purpose,

I. *To shew the Honours which Almighty GOD put upon the Law at it's Promulgation.* And

II. *Explain the excellent Characters or Properties which are ascrib'd to the Moral Law*

The Dignity of the Moral LAW. 135
Law in *sacred Scripture*, and then offer
some Improvement from the whole.

But before I insist upon the Method
propos'd, I shall beg leave to premise a
few Words concerning the various *Ac-*
ceptions of the Word LAW. The *Latin*
Word for it, is deriv'd from Participles that
signify *reading* and *binding*, because Laws
were wrote to be read by all, and have
a binding or obligatory Power: * And
hence they are frequently compar'd in Scrip-
ture to *Bands*; thus the *Psalmist* represents
the Wicked, as setting themselves in Op-
position to and conspiring against the LORD
and his anointed, saying *let us break their*
Bands asunder and cast their Cords from us. †
These *Children of Belial* would not be
subject to CHRIST as a KING, but base-
ly renounc'd Allegiance to his Govern-
ment; they would not have this Man to
rule over them; they were impatient of
restraint, and would not come under the
Obligation of his *Laws* and conform them-
selves to their Direction; they judg'd them

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* *Lex vel a Legendo ut isido: vel a Ligando ut Thomas*
quasi vinculo ad obedientiam ligans. † *Psa. ii.*

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a Burthenfome Imposition upon their Liber-
ty and Pleasure, and therefore were deter-
min'd to reject their Authority and violate
their Inclosures; But for this arrogant Re-
bellion the Almighty threatens to have them
in Derision, and vex them in his sore Dis-
pleasure: And Jeremiah complains of some
in his Time, that they broke the Yoke and
*burst the Bands. * They insolently refus'd*
to be controul'd in impious Courses by the
Bands of GOD's Law; and would not bear
the Yoke of his Government, but broke
through and burst in Pieces, with presump-
tious Violence their Obligations to their
Sovereign. The Greek Word for Law is
deriv'd of a Verb, which signifies both to rule
and distribute. † The Moral Law is not
only the Rule of Practice, but of Judgment:
The final Distribution of Rewards and
Punishments shall pass according to this
LAW.

Some learned Men observe, that the *He-*
brew Word for Law is deriv'd from a Root
that signifies to teach or point out the Way, ¶
because

* Jer. v. 5. † Nemo a nemo tribuo distribuo rego vide pa-
 storis Lex: ¶ pastoris Lexicon. Tures Theolog. elenct, Vol. 2.
 Pa. 1. Doctor Ridgley's body Divinity, Vol. 2. P. 227.

The Dignity of the Moral Law. 137
because Men are instructed by it concerning their Duty.

This Word is taken divers Ways in Scripture, either (1st.) more largely for the whole Word of God, * the whole *Old Testament*, † the whole *Jewish OEconomy*, or Dispensation of God's Worship to that Nation: And hence it is said that *the Law was given by Moses*, ‡ and for the *five Books of Moses* as distinguish'd from the Prophets and Psalms. ¶ It is likewise taken for the Psalms themselves, ** and sometimes it intends the *ceremonial Law*, in which Respect it is said to be *a Shadow of good Things to come*. †† Sometimes by a *Synecdoche* it only intends the *Condemnation of the Law*; in which Sense these Words of the Apostle to the *Galatians* are to be understood, *against such there is no Law*. ††

Sometimes it is taken *strictly* for the *mosaick Dispensation*, as oppos'd to the *New-Testament*, in which Sense these Words of *Paul* to the *Hebrews* are to be understood,

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stood,

* Psa. i. 2. † John xii. 34. † John i. 17.
¶ Luke xxiv. 44. ** John xi. 34. †† Heb. x. 2.
†† Gal. v. 23.

stood, for the Priesthood being changed, there is made of Necessity a Change also of the Law, † a Disannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

‡ The Weakness and unprofitableness of the *mosaick* Dispensation to many, arose chiefly from their Abuse of it, in expecting Pardon and Sanctification by it, without minding the Promise, which preceded it Four hundred & thirty Years, to which it should have led them: They depended on their outward Obedience, and slighted Christ and his Sacrifice, which prov'd fatal to them. The following Words of *John* the Evangelist are to be taken in the same Sense, for the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ: *i. e.* Thro' Moses as God's Minister and Servant, a more *obscure* and *terrible* Dispensation was introduc'd, which many abus'd in the Manner before represented to their Ruin. But Jesus Christ has brought in by the Gospel, a brighter and more comfortable Dispensation, which hath a *Glory that excelleth;*

colleth; it is attended with clearer Light, and for the general, with larger Distributions of Grace and Comfort, than the legal Dispensation. Sometimes the Word Law is taken strictly, for the Covenant of Works precisely, as contradistinguished from the Covenant of Grace; in which Sense the Apostle to the Romans says, *that Believers are not under the Law but under Grace.* * But more generally it signifies the Ten Commandments; and this is undoubtedly the Sense of it in our Text as has been before prov'd.

Now the *Dignity of the Moral Law*, appears from the following Considerations, *viz.*

First: Almighty God put Honour upon it, in the *Manner of its Promulgation*; it was given forth with the most awful Solemnity, and Ensigns of commanding Majesty, that thereby Reverence and Obedience might be procur'd to it. The great God himself spoke all the Words of the Moral Law, † and at the Time of the giving of it Jehovah descended in visible Glory from the Mansions of Light, the Seat of his special Residence upon Sinai's Mount; which the *Psalmist* represents

* Rom. vi. 14

† Exod. xx. 1.

represents with great beauty and grandeur of Diction; *He bowed the Heavens and came down, he rode upon the Cherubims, and did fly upon the Wings of the Wind, he made Darkness his Pavilion round about him, at his Presence the Earth shook, and the Foundations of the Hills were moved, and particularly (as it were for fear of the descending God) Sinai trembled, and was wrap'd in Fire and Smoke!* ¶

The Terrors of that Day were likewise increas'd, by the loud and long Blasts of a Trumpet, by successive Peals of Thunder and Flashes of Lightning, which opened a most tremendous Scene!

To what has been said we may add, the divine Injunction, that the People must prepare themselves to hear the LAW; they were to *sanctify themselves and wash their Cloaths*: Now tho' this was a ceremonious Usage peculiar to the *Jewish* Oeconomy, yet doubtless the Sanctification of the Heart was thereby signified. They were also to abstain from conjugal Liberties,

ties, that they might attend on the Hearing of the Law with greater Solemnity!

And Bounds were set to the Mount that none might touch it, in order to create a Reverence of that Law that was then to be proclaim'd! †

Secondly: Another Instance of Honour put upon the Moral Law, was the writing of it upon Tables of Stone by the Finger of God: ‡ By which we are doubtless to understand his Power and immediate Operation: This was surely design'd to represent in a familiar Manner, the eminent *Dignity* and perpetual *Duration* of the *Moral Law*.

Thirdly: Jehovah's repairing the Tables after they were broken, is an additional Argument for the *Dignity* of the *Law*: Jehovah commanded Moses to hew two Tables of Stone like unto the First, and promis'd that he wou'd write upon them the Words which were in the first Tables, that Moses broke: * Here it is evident, that the writing upon the second Tables, was done immediately by God himself, like that of the First.

Fourthly:

† Ex. xix. 9. to the 22. Verse.

‡ Ex. xxxi. 28.

* Ex. xxxiv. 1.

Fourthly: The Shine upon the Face of Moses was so great, that the Israelites could not stedfastly behold him without a Vail, This the Apostle Paul applies to the Ministration of the Law, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, † and acknowledges that it had a great deal of Glory in it, but such as was to vanish; not that the Law it self was to vanish, no by no Means! but only that particular Dispensation of it of which he speaks, which was attended with many Ceremonies and Types, that when the Antitype came, of their accord vanished.

When the Apostle calls the Law, a *killing Letter*, a *Ministration of Death and Condemnation*; he speaks of it only ‘as separate from, and set in Opposition to the Gospel, † which it never was (says excellent Mr. Flavel) since the Fall, but by the Ignorance and Infidelity of unregenerate Men.’ * Again

Fifthly: The Preservation of the Law in the Ark, and that by vertue of the Order of God, is another Evidence of its Dignity

Dignity and Excellency : ¶ To which might be added, the Time of *Moses's* being on the Mount at the giving of it, and his Preservation for the Space of Forty Days, without Meat or Drink, which doubtless was a Miracle wrought in Honour of the Law of God. But I proceed to the

II. Propos'd, which was to shew *the Excellency of the Moral Law, from the Characters or Properties ascrib'd to it in the divine Word.*

Now the Moral Law has the following Characters in Scripture, *viz.*

First, It is call'd the *Royal Law*, to signify that it is enjoyn'd by the Authority of God as a King; and if so, then it must needs be an Instance of *Loyalty* to obey it, and of *Rebellion* against the *King and Lord* of all, to disclaim and reject it. The royal Law is the King's Law : *i. e.* ' The great Law, which is the same to all rich and poor, the common Rule by which all are to act, as the King's Way : † *i. e.* ' the great, plain Way, in which all are ' to

¶ 1 Kings viii. 9. † Numb. xxi. 22.

144 *The excellent Characters*
'to travel.' * This Sense of the Words the Apostle *James* confirms, by saying in the same Verse, *if ye fulfill the Royal Law according to the Scriptures, ye do well:* Now that he means the Moral Law, appears plainly from what is express'd in the same Text, *thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* † The Word *fulfill*, or as the Original may be rendred, *perfect*, ¶ considered in connexion with the preceeding and following Verses, can intend no more than a sincere Endeavour to keep all the Precepts of the Law impartially, which he opposes to their Partiality in the Law, by respecting some Precepts and neglecting others.

This *Law* is full of *royal Majesty*, both on the Account of the *Author* and *Matter* of it; it is enjoyn'd by the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, who has Power to bind and loose the Consciences of Men, and is only able to *save and destroy*; and the *Equity* of its *Matter*, does likewise establish its universal and unceasing Empire,
and

* *Vid. Paul's Annot.* † *Jam. ii. 8.* ¶ *Teleite.*

and venerable Majesty; and hence it is the same with the *Law of Nature*, from which, as a Fountain, all other good Laws do spring, to every of which it is superior and by which they are all judg'd, but it is judg'd by none!

Secondly: Its a *spiritual Law*: We know says the Apostle Paul, that the Law is *spiritual*, we know it both by Inspiration and Experience; the Law is spiritual in respect of its *Author*, *Extent* and *Tendency*, God who is a Spirit has formed it, and made it extend to the spirit or Soul of Man; it not only regulates our overt Actions, but prescribes Bounds to our Thoughts and Desires, as appears from our Lord's Explication of it. † It requires spiritual Duties, such as pure *Love* to the blessed God, *Faith* in his Word, and a *Reverence* of his Majesty, as well as *outward Acts* of Obedience from spiritual Principles, and therefore it tends to make those that are subject to it, spiritual in the Frame of their Minds, and so conform them to that God who is a Spirit.

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Thirdly:

Thirdly : It is a *holy Law* ; the *Law is holy, and the Commandment holy* : †† The Law is not only holy in respect of its *Author*, but likewise in regard of its *Nature and Effects* ; it proceeds from a holy God, and enjoyns universal and persevering Holiness upon the Creature ; it is holy in all its Branches, and especially in its *Precepts*, which recommend nothing but what is pure and holy, and agreeable to the divine Will ; and hence the *Psalmist* assures us, that *the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the Eyes* : * Particularly the Law is holy in respect of the Duties towards God which it enjoyns, such as a Dedication of our selves and our all to God's Glory and Service, with *Trust, Reverence and Love*.

It is a *crystal Image* of the *blessed God*, in it, as in a *Glass*, we may behold a bright, a beauteous *Emblem* of his *Justice and Purity* ; and indeed the Design of the Law is to conform us thereto, and of this, thro' the holy Spirit's Influence, it is a happy Instru-

†† Rom. vii. 12. * Psalm xix. 8.

Instrument ; and hence is the following Expression of the Psalmist, *thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it* : And elsewhere, *the Words of the Lord are pure Words, as Silver try'd in a Furnace of Earth, purified seven Times.* The whole Word of God, and especially his Law, is perfectly Pure and inexpressibly Precious !

4thly. It is a *Just Law.* † This is especially applicable to the second Table of it, the Precepts of which require the strictest Justice and Equity in our Dealings with Men, and forbid the Contrary, they require *that we should do to others what we would they should do unto us.* This, says our Lord, *is the Law and the Prophets,* * i. e.

the Substance of the second Table of the Law, according to the Explication thereof by the Prophets: The Law is just and reasonable, grounded upon the plainest Maxims of natural Equity and Right; agreeable hereto is that beautiful Expression of the Psalmist, *the Statutes of the Lord are Right, rejoicing the Heart.* ‡

5thly. It is a *good Law.* This the Apostle

postle *Paul* asserts, not only in his Epistle to the *Romans*, † but likewise to *Timothy*, in these Words, *knowing the Law is good, if a Man use it lawfully.* ¶ The moral Law is always good *absolutely*, or in it self considered, because it is the Image of the Divine Excellency, and grounded upon the invariable Nature, Reason and Relation of Things; neither does the abuse thereof any more affect or alter it in this Sense, than the abuse of Christ or the Doctrines of Grace alter them.

But the Law is only good *relatively*, or in respect of us when we use it agreeable to its *Design*: The Apostle confirms his Position respecting the Goodness of the Law by his own and others Experience. *We know, i. e.* we Apostles, we Christians know by Experience, *that the Law is Good, it has had good Effects upon us.* “It works Goodness, (*sayeth Mr. Pool*) in the observer of it, and is conducive to his temporal and eternal Good.”

Not only the *Author* of the Law is Good; incompre-

incomprehensibly and inexpressibly Good, essentially and communicatively Good; but the *Matter* thereof is good also. What can be more rational than the *Fear* of God, *Faith* in him, and *Love* to him, and *Acts* of *Homage* and *Worship* flowing from such noble Principles which are recommended by the first Table of the Law? And what can be more rational in itself, and necessary for us, (in its Place) than the *Duties* of *Justice* and *Charity* recommended by the second?

Things that are merely *positive*, are Good because they are commanded, and therefore alterable; but Things that are *Moral* are commanded because they are *intrinsically Good*, and agreeable to that eternal Justice and Goodness that are in God himself: And hence it necessarily follows, that to suppose that God may command contrary Things (in a moral Sense) is to suppose that God may contradict his own Nature and to deny himself, which is Blasphemous?

And indeed the Contrary of the Moral Precepts

Precepts, does not only destroy all Religion, but likewise civil Society at a Stroke !

Neither did the Command of God to *Abraham* to slay his Son, and to the *Israelites* to borrow Jewels of the *Egyptians*, contradict the Precepts of the Moral Law : For in the former Instance the Sovereign Lord of Life and Death did but give Authority to *Abraham* to take away a Life which he was the sole Author of, and therefore could remove when he pleas'd ; but *Murder* is the taking away of a Life without just Authority. And in the latter Instance, the Almighty, who made all Things, and is consequently absolute Owner of them, did but transfer the civil dependant Right of the *Egyptians* to the *Israelites* ; and this indeed was but a just Compensation for their hard Services. *May not the Lord do with his own what he pleases ?* But Theft is the taking away what belongs to another without just Authority or Right.

And it may be farther observ'd, that the *Egyptians* gave their Vessels freely to the *Israelites*, neither did they ask them again
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when they left that Part of the World but drove them away with the Vessels in haste ; neither was the other Precept to *Abraham* absolute, but only a Command of Tryal.

But to proceed. The *Matter* of the *Law* is *Good*, not only in respect of it's *Precepts* but *Sanctions*. It is accompany'd with Promises both of spiritual and temporal Good, as appears from the second and fourth Commands : It was therefore wicked in the *heretical Manichees* (who infested the Church about the fourth Century, whom blessed *Augustine* faithfully oppos'd) to say that the Law was only Carnal, and had only carnal Promises ; whereas it is certain that the *Jewish* Church had for Substance the same Faith, which we now, thro' divine Goodness, enjoy. And the *Threatnings* annex'd to the Moral Law are Just, and therefore Good.

Again, the *Law* is *Good* in regard of it's *Use*. Now the *Use* of the *Moral Law*, is either *general* to all Men or *particular* to some. And,

1st. “ The Moral Law is of Use to all
 “ Men, (say the *Westminster Assembly* in the
 “ larger

“ *larger Catechism*) to inform them of the
 “ holy Nature and Will of God, and of their
 “ Duty, binding them to walk accordingly;
 “ to convince them of their Disability to
 “ keep it, and of the sinful Pollution of
 “ their Nature, Hearts and Lives; to
 “ humble them in Sense of their Sin and
 “ Misery, and thereby help them to a
 “ clear Sight of the need they have of
 “ Christ, and of the Perfection of his O-
 “ bedience.”

The *Moral Law* is a Declaration of
 God's Will to Mankind, respecting their
 Duty to him and each other, obliging them
 to personal, perfect and perpetual Obedi-
 ence.

As we are *Creatures* we are *Subjects*, he
 who gave us Being has a Right to demand
 Obedience from us, to what he prescribes.

And tho' we have made ourselves un-
 able to perform perfect personal O-
 bedience to the Law, yet God's Right to
 it remains firm; our Sin cannot lessen that:
 And tho' Provision is made through Christ
 for the Justification of our Persons upon
 believing, and the Acceptance of our sin-
 cere,

cere,

cere, tho' imperfect, Services thro' him; yet are we bound by the Law as a Rule to seek after a Perfection of Holiness in our own Persons, and to lament from Love our Defects. The Design of Christ's coming into the World was to strengthen the Obligation of the Law as a Rule, by Arguments of Ingenuity and Gratitude instead of dissolving it. Here observe,

1st. That the *Law informs* all Men of the Holy Nature of God and their *Duty* to him: The divine *Perfections* are impress'd on the *Moral Law* in large, legible and indelible *Characters*; his *Sovereignty* in demanding Obedience; his *Wisdom, Holiness* and *Righteousness* in the Nature of the *Duties* requir'd, which are reasonable, pure, equal, and his *Goodness* in their Use and Benefits to us: What is the Language of the Law, but *Holiness* towards God and *Righteousness* towards Man?

2dly. The Moral Law binds the Consciences of all Men to Obedience, so that none have Reason presumptuously to conclude to their Ruin, *We may live as we list, and who is Lord over us?* And indeed

the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God shine with equal *Glory* and *Lustre* in continuing our *Obligation* to *Obedience* as the *Way* to future *Blessedness*: This *Method* tends to prevent the pregnant *Woe* and *Ruin* which would ensue the *Withdraw* of our *Allegiance* from our *Creator* and *Sovereign Lord*.

3dly. The *Moral Law* being *spiritual*, *pure*, *perfect*, the exact *Model* and *inflexible Standard* of *Integrity* has a noble *Tendency* to shew us that we are *carnal*, *impure* and *imperfect*. When this *Law* by the *Spirit's Influence* enters into the *Soul* and *Conscience*, then does *Sin* abound in our *View*, in respect of its *Number*, *Aggravations* and *Demerit*; and thus we are *convinc'd* of our *Inability* to fulfil it, and *humbled* under a *Sense* of *Sin* and *Misery*, as well as thereby *induc'd* to behold our *absolute Need* of a *Redeemer's Obedience* together with the *Perfection* of it, to answer the *Law's Demands*.

But the particular *Use* of the *Moral Law* either respects the *Unregenerate* or *Regenerate*. Now,

In respect of the *Unregenerate* the Law hath a five-fold Use,

(1st) To *convince them of Sin*: And hence the Apostle Paul says, *he had not known Lust, except the Law had said thou shalt not covet. What shall we say then? Is the Law Sin? God forbid! Nay, I had not known Sin but by the Law.* The Apostle rejects this Inference with Abhorrence, viz. Because that Sin sometimes takes Occasion to rage the more, because of the Law's Restraints; that therefore the Law itself is Sin, *God forbid!* says he: * When the Sun shines upon the Dunghil it sends forth a more noisom Smell, of which its pure Beams are not the Cause, but Occasion only. The Apostle farther informs us, *that he was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin reviv'd and he died: † i. e.* Before the Law of God was brought home with Power to his Conscience, he had a false Peace and a false Hope; but so soon as the Law came in its Spirituality and Power, he lost

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* Rom. vii. 7.

† Rom. vii. 9.

them, and law he was a dead Man; and elsewhere we are told, *that by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.* †----It's true the Holy Spirit is the efficient Cause of Conviction, but the Law is the Instrumental.

(2dly.) The *Law* is of excellent Use to condemn for Sin: And hence the Apostle informs us in his Epistle to the Romans, *That what Things soever the Law sayeth, it sayeth to them who are under the Law: That every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become Guilty before God.*

* The Condemnations of the Law shut the Sinners Mouth, and silence his Self-righteous Pleas.

(3dly.) The *Law* is good to restrain from Sin; and hence it is said, *to be added because of Transgression.* ‡ The Law is added as it were, as an Appendix to the Covenant of Grace, to promote the great Design of it, by convincing of, and restraining from Transgression! The Terrors with which the Law is arm'd, tend to deter the Unregenerate from those Impieties which otherwise they

† Rom. iii. 20. * Rom. iii. 19. ‡ Gal. iii. 19.

they would commit: Indeed without this, human Society could not well subsist, however pious Souls are influenced chiefly by nobler Motives. *Self* is the main Spring of the Actions of the Unregenerate, and on this Account the Threatnings of the Law are peculiarly adapted to influence their *Fear*; and this seems to be the Apostle's Scope, when he says, *that the Law is not made for a righteous Man, but for the Ungodly, and Sinners, Unholy and Prophane.* †

(4thly.) The Law is of excellent Use to drive Sinners to Christ for Shelter and Safety, thro' a Sight and Sense of their Undonnets, and Helplessness without him. To this Purpose the Apostle speaks in his Epistle to the Galatians, in the following Words: *Wherefore the Law was our Schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justify'd by Faith.* * The Law as a Schoolmaster, scourges rebellious Sinners out of their Security and Sloth, and makes them flee for Refuge to the Hope set before them, as the Avenger of Blood did the
Man

† 1 Tim. i. 9.

* Gal. iii. 24.

Manlayers of old, to the City of Refuge appointed for their Reception. The Law by opening the Sinner's deadly Wounds, compels him to seek in haste and earnest the Balm of *Gilead*, and the Physician that is there; till this, Christ is neglected, for *the Whole need no Physician, but the Sick*; and hence the Apostles us'd alarming Methods in their Sermons, in order to rouse a secure World, and constrain them to fly as for their Lives, from future Wrath to Christ; *Knowing the Terrors of the Lord* (says blessed Paul) *we perswade Men. Christ is therefore said to be the End of the Law,* * which respects not only his Fulfilment of its Demands, by his active and passive Obedience, but also signifies that he is pointed to by it, as it is added to the Covenant of Grace. It Storms the Sinner out of his false Refuges, and *shuts* him up to Christ as the only *Door of Hope*, in whom we may obtain the *Righteousness of the Law.* † To the same Purpose, these Words of the Apostle to the *Galatians* are very

* Rom. x. 4. † Rom. viii. 4. *Dicasoma verum.*

very full and conclusive; For I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God: i. e. I through the Law as an Instrument, am become dead to all Obedience to the Law as a Covenant; or in other Words, through the Application of the Law to my Conscience by the holy Spirit, I am drove from all Expectation of Justification by Obedience to it, and this every Man must feel or Experience, before he lives to God's Glory as his highest End; without which *single Eye*, as our Saviour expresses it, we are *in Darkness*, and all our sacred Service is unacceptable, because it issues chiefly from a selfish Principle.

(5thly.) The Law of God is also a *Mean* of *Conversion* to him: This is expressly asserted by the *Psalmist* in the following Words; *The Law of the Lord is perfect converting the Soul.* ¶ If it be laid, that the Law in the aforefaid Scripture, is to be taken in a large Sense: I answer, what then, it does not weaken the Argument, except it be taken in such a Sense as to exclude the

the Moral Law, which cannot be prov'd; It is absurd to suppose, that the *Psalmist* under the Term *Law*, should recommend all the Word of God, except that of which he spoke expressly; especially considering that the Moral Law, together with its Explication, was the chief Part of the Scriptures at that Time.

Nor is it reasonable to imagine, that our Lord in his first Sermon, wou'd have used a Method which had no direct Tendency to convert his Hearers. Now we are sure that that Sermon was spent in opening the Law, in freeing it from the false Glosses of the Pharisees, and in urging the Duties of it. †

Why should that Influence and Effect, be deny'd to any Part of the Word which the Spirit of God ascribes to the Whole? All Scripture is said to be *profitable for Doctrine for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished into all good Works.* * Now seeing every Part of the
 Scripture

† Mat. v.

* 2 Tim. i. i. 16, 17.

Scripture hath its partial Fitness to produce the aforesaid Effects, why shou'd any Part be rejected? Is not the Word in general compar'd, to *Seed sown that bringeth forth Fruit*. †

Neither *Law* or *Gospel* have any *physical* or inherent *Virtue* in them, to convert Men to God; for then Persons wou'd be always converted at the Hearing of them, which we know is not fact. Take the *Gospel* as well as the *Law* without the Spirit, and it is, as to Influence, but a *dead Letter*. The Word of God concurs to Conversion only *objectively* and *morally*. As an Object it presents Truths to the Mind, directs, informs and perswades, in a moral or rational Way; but has no abiding, efficacious Influence without the Spirit's Concurrence; in that Respect it is like the *Pool of Bethesda*, whose Waters had no healing Influence, but at such Seasons when an Angel descended and troubled them.

- Now seeing the *Law* hath that *objectively* in it, which may work exceedingly
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† Matt. xiii.

upon the Heart when accompanied with the Spirit's Influence, then why may it not be used *instrumentally*, as well as the *Gospel* in the Conversion of Sinners? When that pure *Glass* is opened in its spiritual Extent, and divine Excellency, by which it resembles the Nature of God himself, why may not the blessed Spirit accompany it, to enflame the Heart with love to the Author of it?

If the Law may be bless'd for the increase of Grace, why not to the beginning of it? but it doubtless is to the former. Do not pious Souls know by Experience, that the Law helps to humble them, and consequently incites them to prize Christ the more? Why therefore may it not be a Mean of the latter, namely Conversion? But to this, that saying of Paul to the *Galatians* is objected, *viz. received ye the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of the Faith?* †

Ans. The Meaning of the Place, as appears by the Context is this: That the *Galatians*

† Gal. iii. 2.

Galatians were not made partakers of God's Spirit, either in his ordinary or extraordinary Gifts, by the corrupt Doctrine of the false Teachers, (who had not long before too easily seduced them from the Simplicity of divine Truth, by blending or mixing the Righteousness of Christ and Works together, in the Point of Justification,) but before while they heard the pure Doctrine of Christ; and therefore that it was their Folly, having begun in the Spirit to end in the Flesh. As by the Hearing of Faith, we are doubtless to understand the Doctrine of Faith, so by the Works of the Law, the Doctrine of the Works of the Law, which the false Apostles taught.

It is unfair and unreasonable, for any to compare the Law considered without the Spirit, with the Gospel attended with it, for by the same Rule, we may prefer the Law before the Gospel: e. g. We may suppose a Minister opening the Duties of the Law in imitation of our Lord, * and the Spirit concurring therewith to the Con-

* Matt. v.

version of Men : And on the other Hand, suppose one preaching the *Gospel* in all its *Riches* and *Charms*, without the Spirit's Influence and no Effect produc'd.

Having shewn the *relative Goodness* or *Usefulness* of the *Law* to the *Unregenerate* in divers Instances, I proceed to shew its Use to the *Regenerate*. Now to such the *Law* is a *Rule*, to direct them in their *Duty* to *God* and *Man*, without which we cannot discern the *Depth* of *Sin*. According to this *Rule*, as explain'd and recommended by the *Doctrines* and *Precepts* of the *Gospel*, and the *Grace* of *God* we ought to walk : *Let us*, says the *Apostle* to the *Philipians*, *walk by the same Rule, and mind the same Thing* : † There is an *Allusion* in this *Figure* to *Architects*, *Soldiers* or *Racers*, who all have a *Rule* to act by, or a certain *Measure* of their *Motions* prescrib'd and prefix'd, to which they should conform with exactness : While the *Apostle* mentions the same *Rule*, he surely had in his *Eye* some certain, well-known *Cannon* or *Rule*, which had the *Stamp* of *divine Authority* upon it, by believing,

† Phil. iii. 16.

believing, loving Conformity, to which, (as a Mean) God's *Israel* may expect Peace; † and this can be no other than the *Moral Law* explain'd, &c. as before; for besides this there is no certain, compleat, well-known Rule of Action, enjoyn'd upon us by divine Authority.

Now the Law as a *Rule*, is of excellent Use to regenerate Persons, in the following Respects.

1st. It discovers Heart Sins: The *Apostle* had not known the Evil of Lust, if the Law had not said, thou shalt not covet. * There is more Pollution in us than we do or can discover; Who can understand his Errors, lays the Psalmist, cleanse thou me from secret Faults. ¶ Now the Law of God being exceeding broad and spiritual, requiring Holiness in our Thoughts, Dispositions and Designs, and forbidding the Contrary, † must needs have a Tendency to discover to us our spiritual and secret Impieties.

(2^{dly}.) By the aforesaid Discovery, it tends to humble us, and consequently to drive

† Gal. vi. 16.

* Rom. vii. 7.

¶ Ps. xix. 12.

† John iii. 15.

drive us from a Dependance upon our own Wisdom, Power and Righteousness to Christ, for understanding, Pardon and Strength: When we are made to see how far we come short of that Righteousness the Law requires; nothing tends to humble us more, and make us loath our selves and all we do! which is a Blessing promis'd by the New Covenant, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* informs us: And there shall we remember your Ways and all your Doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and shall loath your selves in your own Sight, for all your Evils that you have committed. * And therefore we should study the Law more and more, and pray to *Jehovah* in the *Psalmist's* Strains, open to us mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous Things out of thy Law. †

It is surely Ignorance of God's Law, that makes Men proud and Self-righteous, and conceit that they are perfect. What made the *Pharisees* so confident upon a false Foundation, so Conceited and full of Prejudice against Christ and his Gospel, but

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* Ezek. xx. 43. † Psalm cxix. 18.

but their Ignorance of the Spiritual Extent of the Law? This puffed them up with ambitious Disdain of others, and inclin'd them to say, as the Prophet expresses it, stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou; † and therefore thou art not good enough to converse with me, I am not as another. Men are, or even as this Publican * Nothing makes Men more odious to God, than a proud Conceit of themselves and Contempt of others, that are as Smoke in the Nostrils of God, Smoke that comes from a Fire of wet Wood that has nothing in it but what is offensive. ‡ (3dly.) The Law tends to make us prize Christ by shewing us our need of Him. After Paul was enlightned and alarm'd by the Law, he was then inclin'd to prize Deliverance by Christing † Jesus Christ is certainly a Believers Life, to me to live is Christ, ‡ * v. 18. The Grace of Christ was the Spring of his Life, the Glory of Christ was the Scope of his Life, and the Offices of Christ the Support of his Life: The true

† Isai. lxxv. 5.
‡ Rom. vii.

* Luke 18. 12.
‡ Phil. i. 21.

‡ Isaiah lxxv. 5.

true Believer lives daily upon Christ in his Offices, *Prophetical, Priestly and Kingly*. Now the Law by shewing him his Ignorance, Guilt and Weakness, inclineth him to seek *Light from Christ as a Prophet, Pardon from Christ as a Priest, and Strength to conquer Sin and perform Duty from Christ as a King*, and thus he is led by the Law to come up out of the *Wilderness of this World* leaning on his beloved. *

(4thly.) The Law excites to Duty, both by its *Precepts and Penalties*: As a *Goad* it rouses the Believer out of his Sloth and Security, and excites him to work out the *Work of his Salvation with fear and trembling*. Altho' the Regenerate have a new Nature, which disposes them to Holiness, and are principally influenced to Obedience from *Love*; yet they need the Discipline of *Fear*: Not is there any inconsistency between a predominant *Love* to God as a Father, and a *Fear* of offending by Sin, as well as the *Consequences of the Offence*.

* Cant. viii. 5.

I may add, that the Law is of singular Service to the People of God, in bringing them to a compassionate and merciful Frame of Spirit towards others that have fallen, by shewing them their own Deformities and Blunders! And as this is a noble Attainment in it self, so it is of great Use in promoting the Good of Society. ‘ The Law is likewise of great Use to Believers, (as the *Westminster Assembly* justly observe) ‘ in shewing them how much they are ‘ bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and ‘ enduring the Curse thereof in their Stead ‘ and for their Good, and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to ‘ express the same in their greater Care ‘ to conform themselves thereunto as the ‘ Rule of their Obedience.

The *Believer* is under a *peculiar* and superadded Obligation to obey the *Law*, for he is not only bound by God’s Sovereignty, over him in common with others, as he is God’s Creature, but he is constrained by the dying Love of Christ, as he is a Believer. Now inasmuch as the Precepts and Penalties of the *Moral Law* being

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exact and great, they serve to shew the Riches and Greatness of the Redeemer's Love, who was willing to be *made under the Law*, and did fulfil its Demands for us; and thus our Gratitude is incited, which cannot be better express'd than by a willing, unfeigned, unfainting, universal Obedience to God's Law, which we owe to *God* as our rightful Lord and Sovereign, our Creator, Benefactor and Father; to *Christ* as our King and Redeemer, and to the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier.

But beside these spiritual Benefits of the Moral Law to the Unregenerate and Regenerate, which have been mentioned, the Law promotes the temporal Good of both; this is the *Guardian* and *Barrier* of all that is naturally dear to us; hereby our Names and Estates, our Liberties and Lives are protected from Injustice and Violence!

But I proceed to offer a Word of Improvement. And

First: Methinks what has been said concerning the Use of the Moral Law, should excite you to examine your Consciences, whether you have found the afore-
said

said Effects of it in your selves? O! have ye felt its convincing and condemning Power? Have ye been thereby thro' the Influence of God's Holy Spirit, brought to see not only the Evils of your Practice, but also that Fountain of Corruption in the Heart from which they proceed? Particularly have ye been convinc'd of your Unbelief? Your total Want of true Faith and Inability to Believe, as well as your utter Unworthiness of the Gift of Faith from God? O! were ye ever made sensible that ye were in a perishing State with the Prodigal? And has the Spirit of God become a *Spirit of Bondage to fear* to your Souls? Shewing you thro' the Condemnation of that righteous Law ye have broken, the Greatness, Certainty and Eternity of that *Misery* you were thereby expos'd to, in such a strong Light as to affect your Souls with bitter Anguish and Distress, and excite anxious Enquiries after the Way of Deliverance therefrom? And were ye Restless, till being made to despair of your own *Wisdom, Power* and *Righteousness*, and of sufficient Help from any meer Creature, ye were enabled by the Holy Spirit, upon a Discovery of

Christ's Sufficiency and Willingness, (to help poor sin-sick Souls that fly to him for shelter) to venture your wounded, weary Souls by believing upon him, as the only Foundation of Acceptance with God? And have ye been since inclin'd to love the holy *Law* of God as a perfect Rule of Life, because of its *Author*, its excellent *Properties* and *Effects*? And has it been your chief Desire and Endeavour in general to conform to it in Heart and Practice, from Love to him as a Father, and Fear of him as a Master and Lord? And have your Defects therein been for the general your chief Grief? If you can answer with a good Conscience in the Affirmative, you are sincere and in a gracious State. O! what cause have ye to love God, my dear Brethren, to exalt him and rejoice in him, in all Changes of outward Circumstance! O how distinguishing and affecting is the Mercy of God towards you! in bringing his blessed Law to your Hearts, and you thereby to the holy Jesus? And that while many others sit as senseless Stones under the same Word; the very Sermon which

which was bless'd to your Conviction or Conversion, perhaps some poor, ignorant, conceity Creatures in the same Assembly, cavil'd with and snarl'd at, and went away and told gross Lies about it, in order to blacken the Speaker instead of getting Good by it. O admire! admire! the rich, the glorious Grace of God! and let that Law that the blessed God has made a Mean of such Good to your Souls, be ever esteemed by you; take it as the Rule of your Practice, *meditate upon it all the Day*, and let it be the chief Labour of your Life to conform to it in Heart and Conversation. O make Use of the Law of God to convince you of Sin, to humble you for Sin, and excite you to thankfulness and practical Holiness. Dear Brethren! Let not your *Religion* lie chiefly at the *Tip* of your *Tongues*, but watch your *Hearts*, and bring forth the *Fruits* of *Holiness* or *Obedience* to God's Law in your Lives.

But alas! how much is the Case of such to be pitied and lamented, who want the forefaid Experiences! All ye to whose Hearts the Law of God has not been brought

brought in its condemning Influence, who have not seen the false Grounds of your Hopes, the Filthiness of your Hearts, and the Badness of your States, and who have never been shut up to Christ as the only Door of Hope by the Law, are false-hearted Hypocrites!

And what ground is there to suspect the State of such who grow weary of Obedience to God's Law, and look upon it to be a State of Bondage? *i. e.* In other Words, it is bondage to be *Holy*, in their Opinion; for Obedience to God's Law, from Love to God and regard to his commanding Authority, is the very Nature of Holiness, as I have prov'd before: They therefore neglect the stated Performance of Duty in their Closets and Families, and count this Christian Liberty, whereas it is only a fleshly Gratifying the wicked Sloth of Nature; Christian Liberty is a Freedom from Sin, and not from Righteousness; *as free* (says the Apostle Peter) *and yet not using your Liberty as a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.* Those that are Christ's Freemen, are God's Servants,

wants, and do manifest it by Obedience to his Authority. Christ has never purchased by his Blood, a Liberty, or rather a Licence for any to commit Wickedness. O! its a Sign of an unholy Heart in any, to be weary of the Yoke of God's Precepts, and to say with the Wicked, *let us break their Bands asunder, and cast their Cords from us.* Those that are sincerely Holy, love God's Law, *it is their Meditation all the Day,* and they look upon Obedience to it, to be sweet Liberty!

But on the Contrary, obstinate Transgressors *break the Yoke, and burst the Bands.* Sirs! it is a dreadful Instance of Wickedness, to pretend that the Gospel or Grace of God, frees from Obedience to the Law; that is, to make the Gospel an Instrument of the vilest Iniquity, and to say in other Words, that it gives Men licence to renounce God's Authority over them, and rise up in Rebellion against his Crown and Scepter! or that it has put an End to all Holiness in those that accept it. No worse Dishonour can possibly be put upon the Gospel by the Sons of Men than this!

Whereas

Whereas on the Contrary, it is the Design of the Gospel, *to deliver us from the Hands of our Enemies, that we may SERVE him without fear, (i. e. slavish Fear) in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life; to destroy the Works of the Devil, and to make us zealous of good Works.*

My Brethren! The *World* and the *Church* have been infested with *Libertines* of this Cast for a long Tract of Time: The *Epicureans* were *Libertines* among the *Pagans*, and so were the *Saducees* among the *Jews*, who were very *Heretical* in their Principles, and had no regard to the divine Law. And there were some such among the *Christians* in the Time of the *Apostles*, whom *Paul* represents as speaking in the following Language: *Is the Law Sin?* and elsewhere, *shall we continue in Sin that Grace may abound?* *i. e.* Since we are delivered from the *Condemnation of the Law*, may we not take *Encouragement* from thence, to cast off the *Law* altogether, and go on in *Sin*? To which the *Apostle* repeatedly replies with great *Indignation* and

Abhor-

Abhorrence, *God forbid! God forbid!* † And in another Place after having mentioned a scandalous Report that some spread about of the Apostles preaching, as if it was of this Tenor, *Let us do Evil that Good may come;* He rejects the Charge with the same Abhorrence in these Words, *Whose Damnation is just!* * And not long after the *Nicolaitians, Gnosticks* and *Valentinians* troubled the Church with the same pestilent Principles, and encouraged themselves in the greatest Immoralities. Of the Principles and Practice of the former, the Lord Jesus expresses a great Abhorrence in these Words; *And this thou hast, that thou hatest the Deeds of the Nicolaitians, which I also hate. ‡ So hast thou also, them that hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitians, which thing I hate!* ¶ The Holy God hates such Doctrines and Deeds as are contrary to his Law! Corrupt Principles naturally lead to evil Practice: And in the Time of *Augustine* the *Manichees* and *Marcionites* cast contempt upon God's Holy Law, whom that excellent

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† Rom. vi. 1, 2. Rom. vii. 7. * Rom. iii. 8. ‡ Rom. ii. 6. ¶ Rev. ii. 15.

cellent Servant of God faithfully oppos'd;
 * And the *Actians* and *Eunomians* who liv'd in the same Age, arriv'd to that shameless Pitch of Wickedness as to hold that the Commission of and Continuance in the vilest Crimes, would do no harm to such as were partakers of their Faith. † And since the Reformation from Popery, the *Antinomians* have brought great Scandal upon the Doctrines of Grace, and done much Injury to practical Religion, they receive their Name from their Opposition to the Law of God. The first of them that appear'd was one *John Agricola*, of *Isleby*, in *Germany*, who abus'd some unguarded Expressions of *Luther's* Writings, contrary to his Intentions, whom *Luther* oppos'd: But the first of them that appear'd in *England* was one *Eaton*, who wrote a Book call'd the *Honey Comb*, &c: ‡ Whatever
 Charity

* The *Manichees* held, that the Devil made the old Testament, and condemn'd it from these Words, *Exo: vii. 2. Tede petov de deo C. 6.* † *Augustinus de eunomio dicit, " Tertur etiam usque ad hunc usque bonis moribus innocens, ut assereret quod nisi illic obisset, quorumlibet perpetratio, ac perseverantia peccatorum, si lapsus que ab illo doctus fidei particeps esset. Vide agust. de heres. cap 54. † Vide Leigh Body*

Charity be exercis'd towards the Persons of such who thro' Ignorance are led astray into some of their Notions, but do not Practice accordingly, yet certainly there is no Charity due to the Principles themselves, for they have a Tendency to destroy Religion entirely.

I would advise such to weigh well the *Characters* that God gives his *Law* in the Scriptures, and consider the Danger of Opposing it while Repentance is to be had. O! that such would look into *the perfect Law of Liberty*, and be doers of *the Work of Holiness*, for *in obeying the Moral Law* they will do well,

And

of Divinity, P. 497, *Etiam* Rutherford's *Surveigh* Mr. Leigh says of the *Antinomians*, " that under a Colour
" of advancing Free Grace, they cry down the Law of
" God, and so are *Enemies to God*, to the *People of God*,
" and to the *Gospel*, 1st. To God in crying down his
" Law ; this is to let every one be at Liberty, and do
" what he list. 2dly. To the *People of God*: The Law
" is to them a Light, a Guide, a Rule, a Councillor.
" 3dly. To the *Gospel* : The Law is subservient to it, 1st.
" In discovering of Sin ; by the Law comes the Know-
" ledge of Sin, and it's Malignity against God and the
" Souls of Men. 2dly. In driving Men to Christ,
" Gal. iii. 24. 3dly. In exalting Free Grace, 1 Tim.
" i. 13. 14. and the value of Christ's Blood." *Vide*
Body of Divinity, P. 36.

And such conceity ignorant *Bablers* are to be reprov'd who make a Noise about Christ and his Blood and Justification, while they slight the Law and oppose Obedience to it: These, *as Natural brute Beasts, speak Evil of the Things they understand not*; such should especially be *swift to hear, and slow to speak, slow to Wrath*, and consider of the Mischief they are doing to the Souls of Men by their confus'd and inconsiderate Speeches! Yea all that go on in a *Course of any Kind of Wickedness* may be judg'd contemners of the Holy Law of God, *Whoremongers and Adulterers* God shall judge: *These shall be especially punish'd who walk after the Flesh, in the Lust of Uncleaness*: These filthy Vermine shall not enter into the Kingdom of God, but be burnt in the Flames of Hell, except they repent; and *Thieves and Liars* shall have *their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*. *He that sows to the Flesh shall of the Flesh reap Corruption*; but *he that sows to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life everlasting*. *The Ax is laid to the Root of the Trees, every Tree that*

that brings not forth good Fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. The Curse of the broken Law lies upon all such Transgressors, and except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.

And now I must conclude this Discourse with a few Words of *intreaty* to different Sorts of Persons. And

1st. I exhort the *Secure* to use the *Law* as a *Mean* to convince and alarm them out of their deep and dangerous Sleep. Think, Sinners, that ye have broke the Law, and are therefore held by its Curse to suffer eternal Fire: *Whatsoever the Law says, it says to those that are under it; that every Mouth may be stop'd, and the whole World become Guilty before God.* Inasmuch as ye have not comply'd with the Terms of the Gospel, ye are under the Law,
i. e. bound

i. e. bound by its *Precepts* to perfect Obedience upon Pain of Death for the least Default : *For cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them,* and bound, by its *Penalties*, to endure the Wrath of God, because ye have broke the Law. O dreadful Case ! Look into this pure Glas; and see what filthy Creatures you are in *Heart*, in *Speech*, and in *Practice* : The habitual Corruption of Nature that is in you, in as much as it is contrary to every Precept of the Law, and permanent, it is therefore a Breach of the whole Law at once, and a constant Breach of it every Moment ; and all your Thoughts, Words and Actions, inasmuch as they come from unrenow'd Nature, are therefore tainted with Sin, *he that is in the Flesh cannot please God* ; so that ye deserve Damnation for the Iniquity that cleaves to every one of them, O dreadful ! O let the Condemnation of God's Righteous Law come into your Hearts, and scorch you into Life and Sense ; awake, Sinners, awake, before the Burnings of the Damned arrest you,
and

and there be no Remedy : *What meanest thou O sleeper? Arise, call upon God that thou perish not.* And

2dly, I exhort the *convinc'd* and *wounded*, to use the *Law* as Mean to drive them to the dear *Redeemer*. Poor Sinners! you feel that you are condemn'd by the *Law*, and that ye cannot fulfil it: O therefore hasten as for your Lives, to an Almighty and merciful Saviour, *who is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to the Father by him, and will by no means cast them out. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World!* And rest by *Faith* your wounded weary Souls upon his *Blood* and *Obedience*, and ye shall be saved! There is a *Balm* in *Gilead*, there is a *Physician* there! But O be careful of quenching *Convictions*, and of false ease! If your *Trouble* be but superficial, use the *Hammer* of the *Law* to fasten the *Nail*, and drive it to the *Head*!

3dly, I exhort the *Converted* to esteem, love and obey God's holy and righteous *Law*, whatever contempt others cast upon it, O let it be dear to you to the *Death*!

Be

Be not deceiv'd, my Brethren, with the Nonsense of *Enthusiasts*, who make a *Separation* between *Duty* and *Priviledge* in *Religion*; to say that it is a *Priviledge* to do that which is not commanded in religious *Worship*, is to say, in other *Words*, that it is a *Priviledge* to commit *Iniquity*; for in *God's* *Worship* what is not commanded is forbid! and therefore doing what is not commanded in the *Case* aforesaid, is like offering *strange Fire*, very abominable and provoking, it is a *Breach* of the second *Commandment*; and tho' the *Thing* be commanded which we do, yet if we have not a respect to the *Command* in the doing of it, it is *Will-worship*, and *voluntary Humility*, it is a *Serving* of our selves and not *God*, yea it is *Rebellion* against him, for therein we disclaim his *Authority*, and obey our own *Will* as our *Lord* and *Master*! On the contrary, to serve *God* truly, is both our *Duty* and our *Priviledge*; it is our *Duty*, because he enjoyns it, and our *Priviledge*, because of the *Honour*, *Pleasure* and *Profit* that attend it.

It is a great *Honour* to have free access

to the Throne of so great and glorious a *Sovereign* ! It is an unspeakable *Pleasure* to have intimate *Communion* with so gracious and blessed a Being ! And eternal *Advantage* follows upon the sincere Service of God ; *Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.* They which have believed in God, must be careful to maintain good *Works* ; these Things are good and profitable unto Men. O it is the *Beauty and Glory of Religion* ! that the great God has graciously made that which is our *Duty*, as we are his *Creatures*, our *Privilege*, as we are his *Children*, and that not only by giving us his *Presence* therein, but by opening before us the sure *Prospect* of *eternal Felicity*, to be obtain'd in this way of *Holiness* or *Obedience* to his *Law* ! Which may God help us to persevere in to the *Death*, that so through *Christ*, we may obtain a *Crown of Life*, that shall never fade away. Amen, Amen !

S E R M O N III.

ROMANS iii. 31.

Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid.

DEAR Brethren! Seeing the right Understanding of the proper Use of the Law of God, together with its *Dignity* and *Excellency*, is of so great Moment in Religion, I hope you will not think it strange that I have repeatedly insisted upon so important a Subject, and especially considering, that it is somewhat difficult to explain and state in an easy Light, to the Overthrow of all the Cavils and Sophisms with which it has been obscur'd and oppos'd, either by the Designing or Injudicious: This I could not do in a very narrow Compass, and therefore have been led reluctant to Prolixity.

I have been likewise induced, my Brethren, the more to ruminare upon this Subject, because it is much misunderstood by some, and slighted by others in the present Day!

It is certainly our Duty in a special Manner, to labour to understand well those precious Truths, that are controverted in the Times and Places in which we live, (especially if they concern practical Religion, and have considerable Influence upon it) that so we may be preserv'd from the Infection of the Times, and glorify God as his Witnesses, in bearing a judicious and faithful Testimony to God's Truths, however they are ignorantly opposed by some, and basely disserted and betrayed by others!

It is, as the Apostle *Peter* observes, *the ignorant and unstable, that wrest the Scriptures to their own Destruction*: It is these simple, silly Souls, that false Teachers deceive with their good Words and fair Speeches, and therefore it is no wonder they cry out against *Head-Knowledge*, because it obstructs the Spread of their erroneous, in-

consistent and nonsensical Sentiments, tho' in the mean time, the God of Truth on the contrary denounces his awful Judgments upon the Ignorant, *this is a People of no Understanding, and therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.*

My Dear Brethren! forget not to abhor and oppose that vile *Popish* Notion, *that Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion!* If they had said that it was the Mother of *Superstition, Enthusiasm* and *Nonsense*, they wou'd have said right, but true Religion is grounded in Knowledge. I pass from this to observe, that I have in the preceeding Sermon, endeavour'd to shew you, *the Dignity and Excellency of the Moral Law*, by mentioning the *Honours* that the blessed God put upon it at its Promulgation, as well as by explaining five honourable *Characters*, that the Holy Scriptures assign to it. What remains now, is to offer some more scriptural *Characters* or *Properties* of the Moral Law, to answer
some

some *Objections*, and then proceed to the *Improvement* of the whole. The

Sixth Character therefore that I wou'd mention, is, that it is a *perfect Law*. Now the Law of God is perfect in the following *Respects*, *viz. Essentially, Extensively, Intensively, and Finally.*

The Law is perfect in its *Nature* and *Essence*, so as to contain in it a compleat Rule of all things, that are to be done and avoided by every one, towards God and towards his Neighbour; so that there is no Work truly and properly Good, which does not agree with it, and is not prescrib'd by it. Whatsoever is neither commanded nor forbid by it, is in its Nature indifferent, and left to Men's Liberty, except that Liberty be restrained by some positive Precept.

The Moral Law is likewise perfect *extensively*, in respect of its *Parts*, it enjoyns Love to God and Man, and therein includes all the Duties we owe to both; and therefore the People of *Israel* were forbid

to add any Thing to it, or diminish any thing from it. ¶

Again the blessed Law of God is *perfect Intensively*, in respect of *Degrees*; it requires perfect Love, the most supreme, transcendent and intense Affection, than which greater cannot be, as I shall shew afterwards.

Add to this, that the Moral Law is perfect *Finally*, in respect of its original Use and Design; it could give Life to the perfect Observers of it: This the Almighty himself declar'd to *Moses* in these Words, *ye shall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgments, which if a Man do he shall live in them.* * Man's contracted inability to keep the Law to Perfection, is his own Fault, and therefore cannot be justly charg'd upon the Law of God.

The Perfection of the Law appears from the Design of Christ's coming, which was not to *destroy*, but to *fulfil* it. The original Word, † by a *Hebraism*, signifies to do what was enjoyned by it. †

The

¶ Deut. iv. 2. * Lev. xviii. v. † *Plerosai*. † Mat. xxii. 37. Rom. xiii. 7. compar'd with Deut. vi. 5. Lev. xix. 18.

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The Lord Jesus *fulfill'd* the ceremonial Law, by shewing in himself the *Truth* of all its *Types* and the *Substance* of all its *Shadows*: And he likewise *fulfill'd* the *Moral Law* two ways, *viz. Doctrinally* and *Practically*. He faithfully *Opened*, solidly *Confirm'd* and nervously *Vindicated* its *Doctrine* by his *Preaching*; and he perfectly and constantly *conform'd* himself to its *Precepts*, as a *Rule* in his *Practice*. Had he corrected the *Moral Law*, he would have *destroy'd* but not *fulfil'd* it; and indeed if the *Case* was so, the *Law* must be either *imperfect* before, or made so by the *Correction*, both which are equally *absurd*!

But it is evident, my Brethren, from the sacred *Records*, that our dear *Redeemer* has not given other *Precepts* in the *New Testament*, either by himself or his *Apostles*, than what were delivered by *Moses*, neither has he offered any other *Explication* upon them than what was inculcated by the *Prophets*, and hence the *Command of Love* is called by *John*, both *old* and *new*. *

Old,

Old, in respect of its first *Promulgation* under the Old Testament Dispensation, and new in respect of *Renovation* and *Illustration* under the Gospel. Brethren I write no new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment which ye had from the Beginning: And hence we may safely conclude, that the *Moral Law* is perfect. To suppose that God gave an imperfect Law at first, is to charge him with Want of Wisdom, Holiness or Fidelity, and to imagine that Christ alter'd it, is to impute Iniquity to him, both which are blasphemous!

No my Brethren! Christ has added no new Precept to the Law of a Moral Nature, the Prophets of the Old Testament, and our Lord under the New, do but explain it, and add not any Moral Duty different from it; *the Law of the Lord is perfect converting the Soul, the Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the Heart.* †

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† Psalm xix. 7, 8.

It is true, under the Old Testament Dispensation, many Things were express'd more obscurely and grossly, yet the Duties commanded were as spiritual as under the Gospel; the Differences as to the Manifestation of Duties, is not in *Kind* but *Degree* only: This will appear by the following Induction of Particulars, *viz.*

First. The *Law* requir'd *Faith*. The first Table of it enjoyn'd Persons to *take the Lord for their God in a covenant Way*; which cannot be done without Faith. The Almighty commanded the People of *Israel* to worship in an acceptable Manner, which necessarily supposes Faith.

Secondly. The *Law* under the *Jewish* Dispensation requir'd *Love*, and that in the highest Degree of Eminence; and hence our Lord in his Explication of the Moral Law observes, that the Sum of it is *Love*. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength: this is the First Commandment, and the Second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy Self: There is none other*

Commandment greater than these. ‡ Does or can the Gospel require stronger Love, than what our Saviour shews to be demanded by the Law? No surely! For more cannot be in the Nature of Things.

Thirdly. It required spiritual *Aims* in religious Worship. And hence the Lord complain'd, that some of the People of *Israel* fasted, but not to him; and on this Account *Israel* is condemn'd, as an empty *Vine*, because he brought forth Fruit to himself: * But on the contrary, how spiritual and noble were the Aims of the Prophets *Mica* and *David*? who spake in the following Language: *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. † Against thee, thee only have I sinned.* ¶

Fourthly. The Law prefer'd *Mortification* and *internal Piety*, before *outward Services*. And hence the Psalmist assures us, that a *broken and contrite Heart* was more acceptable to God, than *burnt Offerings* and *Sacrifices*. † The Prophet *Isaiab* likewise
ex-

† Mark xii. 30, 31. * Hof. x. 1. † Mic. vii. 9.
¶ Psalm li. 4. †† Psalm li. 16, 17.

expresses in the strongest Terms, God's Abhorrence of all external Acts of Religion, when due care is not taken to get the Heart sanctify'd and the Life reform'd: *To what Purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? Sayeth the Lord: I am full of the burnt Offerings of Rams, and the Fat of fed Beasts: bring no more vain Oblations: Incense is an Abomination unto me -- Your New Moons and your appointed Feasts my Soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me: I am weary to bear them: Your Hands are full of Blood: Wash ye make ye clean, put away the Evil of your doings from before mine Eyes.* * Now what can be more spiritual and excellent than this, to prefer inward Graces to outward Duties?

Fifthly, The Law under the Jewish Dispensation, required a Worship issuing from the Heart; to make this evident let it be only considered as a general Rule, that whatsoever Moral Duty the Prophets urge, they do it as explainers of the Moral Law; their Instructions and Inculcations respect-

* *Isaiah i.*

ing Things of *Moral Nature*, are but the unfolding of the Law!

Now how often is the Heart required under the Old Testament? To this purpose are the following Passages recorded by *Solomon* and *Jeremiah*, *My Son give me thine Heart, and let thine Eyes observe my Ways.* † *Plow up your fallow Ground, and take away the fore-skins of your Heart, ye Men of Judah.* * And eliewhere the *Jews* were enjoyn'd, to *make them a new Heart.* † *To turn to God with all their Hearts, and with Fasting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning, and to rent their Hearts and not their Garments.* ¶

It is true, the most were unacquainted with the spiritual internal Part of Religion, and rested upon *Externals*: And isn't it so now under the *Gospel Dispensation*? Yes surely! But such as were truly Religious, labour'd to get their Hearts duly engag'd in *God's Service*; an Instance of this we have in the *Psalmist*, who pray'd,
that

† *Prov.* xxiii. 26. * *Jer.* iv. † *Ezek.* xviii 31. ¶ *Joel* ii. 12, 13.

that God would unite his Heart to fear his Name. * Our Thoughts and Affections are apt to be divided and scattered in Acts of Worship, partly by reason of our inward Corruptions, and partly by Temptations from without, which obstruct both our Comfort and Benefit : This the *Psalmist* was aware of, and therefore prays against a divided Heart.

Sixthly. The *Law* under the *Jewish* Dispensation required Joy, or Complacency in God, more than in Creatures ; and is not this a high Pitch of Spirituality recommended by the Gospel ? Hence we are bid to *rejoice in the Lord always : i. e.* We should seek the *Seed* of divine Joy by *Conversion*, and a *Right* to it by *Justification*, and use all proper Means to acquire and preserve a Temper of Mind dispos'd to constant Complacency in God's Attributes, Word and Works, and express this outwardly on all proper Occasions ; for *every Thing*, as *Solomon* observes, is *beautiful in its Season* : And we are else-
where

* Psalm lxxxvi 11.

where commanded to *set our Affections on the Things above, and to have our Conversation in Heaven.*

And had not *Isaiah* this divine Temper of Mind? How *seraphick* and *sublime* is his Language? *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* * Did not *Job* esteem the Words of God's Mouth more than his necessary Food. † And the *Psalmist* prefer them to Gold for worth, and Honey for sweetness. ‡ How did his Soul at Times cry out after God----and at other Seasons rest in him? ¶ And when banish'd, his chief Desire was to see God in the Beauties of Holiness, while in the mean Time he is entirely silent about his Crown, his Court, his Kingdom! Agreeable to this was the Temper of the Prophet *Habakkuk*, who would rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of his Salvation; altho' the Fig Tree did not Blossom, and there was no Fruit in the Vine, but the Labour of the Olive fail'd,

* Psa'm lxxiii. 25. † Job xxiii. 12. ‡ Psalm xix.
 ¶ Psalm cxvi 7.

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fail'd, and the Fields yielded .. Meat; and altho' the Flock was cut off from the Fold, and there was no Herd in the Stalls. †

Seventhly. The Law under the Jewish Dispensation requir'd Self-denyal, enduring the Cross, and the Imitation of Christ. For when we are commanded to love God above all, we are consequently commanded to deny all, and endure all for him, that we may be call'd to in the Courte of Providence, rather than forsake his Truths and Service. Without this the Sincerity of our Love cannot be manifested, and while the Law prescribes so frequently our Imitation of God, it at the same Time enjoyns the Imitation of Christ, who is the true God. And what is the Imitation of Christ requir'd, but in respect of those Moral Vertues of which the Law is Rule, under which Christ as Man was made, and to which he perfectly conform'd?

And what shining Examples have we, my Brethren, of the Vertues now mention'd, under the Jewish OEconomy? What

† Heb. iii. 17, 18.

What *Self-Denial* did *Abraham* express, in leaving his native Soil? And in his Attempt to slay his *darling Son*! The Son of the Promise, the Son of his aged Years, and of his pregnant Hopes; the Staff of his Comforts in the Wane of Life; yet having a divine Injunction, he immediately denies all that is naturally dear, and by superior Resolution surmounts the strong Tyes of Nature, and passionate Yernings of a Father's Bowels, and takes the sacrificing Knife to give the mortal Stroke! O amazing Prodigy of Self-denial! Be astonish'd ye Heavens, and wonder O Earth at this! And how glorious likewise is the Instance of *Job*, who under a Complication of the most distressing Calamities of various Forms, bore the formidable Shock with unbroken Magnanimity, and blest'd his God! Pray Brethren, does any Instance of the Saints Self-denial under the Gospel exceed these? No surely! And to these we might add, the Example of *Moses*, who refus'd to be call'd the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Plea-

Pleasures of Sin for a Season, esteeming the Approach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt: And we should likewise take the Prophets (as the Apostle James observes) for an Example of Suffering, Affliction, and of Patience.

And altho' the *Law* does not directly and formally command *Repentance*, because it opens no Door of Hope to a Sinner, and so it properly belongs to the Gospel, yet it is referred materially and indirectly to the Law, because by that a Rule of good living and pleasing God is prescrib'd, which is the Scope of *Repentance*. It should be also observ'd, that under the Duties enjoyn'd by the Law towards God and our Neighbour, Duties that respect our selves are included, without which the other cannot be perform'd.

Altho' the *Jewish* Dispensation was not so clear as the present, yet you may see that some who were diligent in God's Service, arriv'd to great Eminence in goodness: Where is there any under the Gospel that exceed?

We declare with the reform'd Churches,

in Opposition to the *Manichees, Turks, Papists, Scocinians, Arminians, Antinomians,* and *Enthusiasts*; that our Lord, excepting a few positive Precepts, has made nothing Duty now, which was not so before.

The Law is perfect, as has been prov'd before; and to that which is perfect nothing can be added of the like kind; and hence the People of *Israel* were enjoyn'd, not to add to it or detract from it. *

Altho' the Gospel far exceeds, in respect of the *Remedy* prescrib'd for poor Sinners, and the Display of divine Grace therein, yet there cannot be a more excellent Way of Holiness than the Moral Law prescribes, because of its conformity to the divine Nature.

Nothing greater or more noble can be requir'd, than those Duties recommended by the Moral Law, which have been mentioned. The Moral Law not only points to the best End, but prescribes the best Measures to attain it.

Nor did our Lord in his Sermon on the Mount

* Deut. iv. 2.

The Law is perfect. 203

Mount, *correct* or *increase* the Moral Law, but only *remove* the *Rubbish* of the false Interpretations of the *Pharisees*, that so it might break out and shine in its own native Beauty and Glory.

As to those Passages in the Writings of the Apostle *Paul*, wherein he speaks diminitively of the Law, they are to be understood either of the ceremonial Law, that *Hand-writing of Ordinances which was nail'd to the Cross of Christ*, or of the whole *Jewish Dispensation*, compar'd with that brighter Dispensation of the Gospel which we enjoy, or of the *Moral Law* consider'd as a Covenant of Works, or depended on for Justification. We are sure that *Paul* speaks highly of the Law, and therefore cannot speak meanly of it in the same Sense, otherwise he is not consistent with himself, which is absurd to suppose! He himself gives us a Key to open those Difficulties, by assuring us in his Epistle to *Timothy*, that the Law is good if a Man use it lawfully. * It is the abuse of the

C c 2 Law

* 1 Tim. i. 8.

Law which the Apostle opposes, in most Places where he seems to speak diminutively of it. Now the Law is abus'd various Ways, viz.

(1st.) When Men turn it into frivolous and unprofitable *Disputes*, when they darken it with obscure and impertinent Questions of no Moment, and do not labour to lead Men to Christ by it: This is doubtless what *Paul* reproveth some false Teachers for in his Epistle to *Timothy*, desiring, says he, *to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.* * These Teachers gave heed to *Fables*, and endless *Genealogies*, turn'd from *Faith, Love and a good Conscience to vain jangling*, and were but *Ignoramusses* in respect of Knowledge: But after the Apostle had reprov'd the aforesaid *Bablers* he immediately adds, *Knowing this that the Law is good, if a Man use it lawfully.* He mentions this to open his Meaning, and shew that it was not the Law it self he spoke against, but the abuse of it.

(2^{dly})

* 1 Tim. i. 7.

(2dly.) The *Law* is *abus'd* when it is interpreted in a gross and carnal Manner, so as to restrain it's Meaning to Externals. This the *Pbarisees* of old were Guilty of, whose corrupt Glosses our Saviour exposes in his Sermon on the Mount, shewing that it extended even to the Thoughts and Desires of the Heart. And the *Papists* do likewise corrupt the *Law* in making it in a great Part to be as a Council and not Obligatory, and by making the *Power* of Man the *Measure* of his *Duty*.

(3dly.) The *Law* is *abus'd* when Men oppose it to *Christ*; and this was doubtless the great Error of the *Jews*, against which the Apostle argues in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, their labouring to mix the Righteousness of *Christ* and Obedience to the *Law* together, as the Matter of their Justification before God, was to oppose them to each other, for if it be of *Grace* it is no more of *Works*.

(4thly.) When Persons, with the *Papists* and *Arminians*, look for Justification as the certain Consequence of their Obedience to the *Law*, and imagine that they can

can commend themselves thereby to God, and lay him under any Obligation to forgive their Sins. This is to establish a Way of Justification of *Debt*, and not of Grace: This is injurious to the Sovereignty of God, and darkens the Glory of divine Grace: This opens a new Covenant of Works, flatters the Creatures Pride, and fixes him upon a false Foundation, *it is not of him that willeth, or him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.*

(5thly) The *Law* is abus'd when any, with the *Manichees* and *Antinomians*, reject it as a *Rule of Life*, and consequently judge Obedience to it unnecessary. This is in other Words to reject Holiness altogether, as appears thus, If Sin be a *Transgression of the Law*, as the Apostle *John* observes, then it follows by the Rule of contraries, that Holiness is a Conformity to it: But if the *Law* be utterly rejected, how can it be conform'd to? And *without Holiness, how shall any Man see the Lord?*

If the *Law* should be rejected, because we have not a Power to keep it perfectly, then the *Gospel* must be rejected too
by

by the same Rule ; for who can believe and repent to Perfection ? To do a Thing out of Love to God and Obedience to his Law are not inconsistent ; for the one is but a Fruit of the other. *If ye Love me* (said the Blessed Jesus to his Disciples) *keep my Commandments : he that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* * Agreeable to this the Apostle John observes , *He that sayeth I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him : But whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected.* † Surely those that love God sincerely, will be thereby inclin'd to regard his Authority. *Adam* while he stood obey'd from Love, and yet had a Respect to the Command : And was there not a Commandment laid upon CHRIST to fulfil the Law for us ? ‡ And yet he did it out of Love. ¶ The Mother of *Moses* had a Command to nurse him, and yet she obey'd from Love.

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* John xiv. 15. 21. † John ii. 4, 5. ‡ 1 John x. 18.
¶ John xiv. 31.

Its in vain to pretend, to advance the Grace of God in Opposition to the Law; he that destroys the one, must the other also. Who will regard the Physician, but the Sick, or behold the brazen Serpent but the Wounded, or fly to the City of Refuge, but the pursued? If Christ and the Law could be under the Old Testament together, why not under the New?

Shall Obedience to the Law be utterly rejected because it doesn't Justify? Then Faith it self must be rejected also, for that doesn't justify considered as a Work: Because Gold cannot be eaten, is it therefore of no use, and must it be cast away? But to proceed;

(7thly) It is a *Law of Liberty*: This the Apostle James asserts in the following Words; *But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, be being not a forgetful Hearer, but a doer of the Work, this Man shall be blessed in his deed.* * i. e. In the way of sincere Endeavours after the Knowledge of our Duty,
by

* James i. 25.

by a careful inspecting into the Meaning of the Moral Law, and a believing, loving, persevering Performance thereof. In Obedience to said Law, a Man can only expect Blessedness hereafter, and posses true Liberty here. This Sense of the Words is agreeable to the general Scope of this Epistle, which is to demonstrate the Necessity, Excellency and Advantage of good Works, in opposition to *Libertines*, who depended upon a dead, ineffectual Faith, and outward Priviledges unimproved, as well as to the preceeding and following Verses, which press practical Holiness and shew the Insufficiency of external Priviledges, and pious Pretences without it.

To confirm what has been said, I shall beg leave to offer a Translation of a Glois that learned Mr. *Pool* has in his Criticks upon the aforesaid Place of Scripture; which runs thus: ‘ Or *Secondly*, the Moral Law, which he opposes to the ceremonial, upon the Observation of which they depended; see *Heb. vii. 17. For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did, by which we draw*

' nigh unto God. Heb. xi. 9. Which was
 ' a Figure for the Time then present, in
 ' which were offered both Gifts and Sacri-
 ' fices, that could not make him that did
 ' the Service perfect, as pertaining to the
 ' Conscience: and x. i. For the Law hav-
 ' ing a Shadow of good Things to come, and
 ' not the very Image of the Things, can
 ' never with those Sacrifices,----make the
 ' comers thereunto perfect. Which is call'd;
 ' (1st) Perfect, as Ps. xix. 7. Rom. xii. 2.
 ' because it contains a perfect Rule of living.
 ' (2^{dly}) a Law of Liberty, and that either
 ' (1st) It condemns all Transgressors freely,
 ' without respect of Persons, sparing none.
 ' Compare Jam. ii. 12, 13. So speak ye and so
 ' do, as they that shall be judged by the Law
 ' of Liberty. For he shall have Judgment
 ' without Mercy, that hath shewed no Mer-
 ' cy. Or: (2^{dly}) From the Subject, because
 ' it agrees with Christian Liberty; Gal. v.
 ' 13, 14. For Brethren, ye have been call'd
 ' unto Liberty; only use not Liberty for an
 ' occasion to the Flesh; but by love serve one
 ' another. For all the Law is fulfill'd in
 ' one Word, even in this, thou shalt love thy
 ' Neigh-

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Neighbour as thy self. In which Sense it agrees well with the Scope of this Epistle, which is, that Christians may be instructed not to abuse their Christian Liberty to Licentiousness and a Contempt of the Law of God, but to use it to Obedience. Or (3dly) From the Adjunct, *i. e.* The Law is now free from a Yoak of Ceremonies which was joyn'd to it under the Old Testament Dispensation: *Gal. v. 1. Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the Yoak of Bondage.* Or (4thly) From its Effects in the Regenerate, whom it frees both from its Rigour and Condemnation by the Satisfaction of Christ, and from the Dominion of Sin by the Grace of Christ conjoyn'd with it; because the Law is a Rule of Life which the Holy Spirit uses, to make Persons know and perform their Duty to it, and that they may obey the Law, not with servile Fear but freely, and with voluntary Obedience, *Rom. vii. 25. I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the Mind*

' I my self serve the Law of God; and viii.

' 15. which undoubtedly is true Liberty.' *

John viii 36. *2 Cor.* iii. 17. If the paralel Place, *viz.* *Jam.* ii. 10, 11, 12. be compared with the Text which I have offered, the aforesaid Gloss upon it fully confirms the Sense that has been given. *Obedience*, my Brethren, to the Moral Law from right Principles, or in other Words, sincere Holiness, is true *Liberty*, and the Contrary is base Bondage; 'tis as perilous as slavish, to follow the wild Freaks of our own uncertain, tho' heated and confident Imaginations, or the transform'd Impulses of a satanick, ambitious Spirit! But to proceed,

(8thly) *The Moral Law is a pleasant Law*, considered as a Rule of Life, and as it is added to the Covenant of Grace. I say it is pleasant to all good Men, and that for this Reason, because it is perfectly Holy. Converted Persons having a holy Principle implanted in them by the blessed Spirit, are thereby induced to love Holiness, and therefore they love God not only because of his

* *vide post Synop in Tac.* Now the aforesaid Gloss is confirm'd by the following great Names, *Gomarus, Gataker, Vexa, Piscator, Ludovicus de dieu, & Simplicius.*

his Mercy, but also because of his Holiness. The Purity of God's Nature appears dear and venerable to them, and hereby they in some Degree imitate the Example of the Seraphims, who are much delighted with the Views of God's Holiness, and in pleasing transport proclaim its Glory, as the Prophet *Isaiab* witnesseth. And now inasmuch as the Moral Law is a bright Emblem of Jehovah's *Purity*, they cannot but be delighted with its *Beauty*; for therein, as in a Glass, they behold the *Holiness* of God, which is exceeding agreeable to their new Nature; And hence the Psalmist represents it to be the Character of a good Man, *that he delights in the Law of the Lord, and meditates in his Law Day and Night.* * And he expresses his own Love to it and Delight in it in the following Manner: *I hate vain Thoughts, but thy Law I do love. † Thy Testimonies have I taken as a Heritage for ever: For they are the rejoicing of my Heart. ‡ O how I love I thy Law! It is my Meditation all the Day. ¶ Thou through thy Commandments has*

* Psalm i. † Psalm cxix. ‡ Ps. cxix. ¶ Ps. cxix.

has made me wiser than mine Enemies, for they are ever with me. * How sweet are thy Words to my Taste, yea sweeter than Honey to my Mouth. Thy Word is a Light to my Feet, and a Lamp to my Paths. All these Expressions, and many more of the like kind, are in the cxix Psalm. Therein we are also told, that Rivers of Waters run down the Eyes, (of that Man after God's own Heart) because that Sinners did not keep God's Laws. And elsewhere he informs us, that the wicked dislike the Restraints of God's Law, and therefore combine together to break its Bands and cast away its Cords from them. † Horror (saith he) hath taken hold upon me, because of the Wicked that forsake thy Law. ‡ It is time for the Lord to work, for they have made void thy Law. § The Prophet Nehemiah likewise gives the Wicked the same Character, Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against thee, and cast thy Law behind their back. †† Graceless Sinners speak much of God's Mercy, and seem

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* Ps. cxix. † Ps. ii. ‡ Ps. cxix. 53. § Ps. cxix.
 †† Psalm cxix.

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to be pleased with it from a selfish Principle; but being under the Government of Sin, they have by consequence an Aversion against its contrary, namely *Holiness*, and therefore dislike the *Rule* of it *God's Law*: And hence we are told that *the carnal Mind is Enmity against God*. The Law of God forbids the Evils they love, and condemns them for them; and so makes them uneasy, and therefore they have a Grudge against it, and want to cast it off, that so their Fancy or Lust may give them Law.

Once more: The *Moral Law* is a *perpetual Law*. *The Righteousness of God's Testimony is Everlasting*.----*And every one of his righteous Judgments, endureth for ever.* *

The *Law of God* is not only necessary for the Ungodly to bring them to true Religion, but it is many ways necessary for the People of God as a *Rule*, and that even under the *Covenant of Grace*: For this *Covenant* does not only contain the *Promises* of

* Psalm cxix.

of *Grace* and *Glory* upon God's Part, but also an *Engagement* upon ours to evangelical Obedience. As God promises to be our God, in respect of Protection and Portion, so we promise to be his People, in regard of Love, Reverence and Obedience. * Yea I may say, my Brethren, that the Moral Law is necessary, as a continual Rule to Believers, on the Account of *God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*; yea and likewise on account of *Grace* here, and *Glory* hereafter.

God the Father who takes us into his *Family* is hereby related to us, both as a Father and Lord; and to him therefore under those *Characters*, we for ever owe *Honour* and *Obedience*. This the Almighty himself informs us of by the Prophet *Malachi*; *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master. If then I be a Father, where is my Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* †

And *God the Son* bears not only the Relation of a *Prophet* and a *Priest* to us, in instructing

* 2 Cor. vi. 16. † Mal. i. vi.

instructing us by his *Word*, and satisfying divine Justice for us by his *Blood* and *Obedience*; but also of a *Head* and *King*, who works in us and rules us by his Spirit. In the former respect he fulfilled the Law for us, and in the latter, he in some degree fulfils the Law in us. Two Things he requires of us, namely, that we be united to him by *Faith*, and to partake of his *Merit*, and express our *Love* by a Conformity to our Head in Obedience to his Commands; and hence his Death is represented, not only as a *Price* of *Redemption*, but a *Pattern* for our *Imitation*: *He has left us an Example, that we should follow his Steps.*

The *Holy Spirit* who consecrates us as the *Temples* of his Residence, has not only the *Office* of a *Comforter* but *Sanctifier*: In the former Respect he *comforts* us against the *Curse* of the *Law*, and in the latter he *conforms* us to its *Precepts*.

Yea, my Brethren, the *Grace* of God confer'd upon us, requires Obedience to the divine Law, as the proper *Fruit* of that divine *Seed*, as an Expression of *Gratitude* for so great a Benefit, and the very

Mark to which it is directed. Holiness is the great Design of our Election, Redemption and effectual Vocation. * Surely the true Grace of God *teaches to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* And what is this but to obey the Moral Law? And doesn't the Glory that we expect, shew the Necessity of the Continuance of the *Law as a Rule?* For believing, loving Obedience to it, has the Respect of a *Medium* to that *End*, without which we cannot attain it. It has likewise a Reference to eternal Blessedness, as a *Way* to a *Mark*, *Seed* to the *Harvest*, † and the *first Fruits* to the whole *Vintage*. ¶ Yea it is the choicest Part of our Happiness, to be conform'd to the blessed God in *Holiness*, by Obedience to his Law.

Did not *Christ* and the *Apostles* confirm and commend the Moral Law, to be observ'd by all? *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart and with all thy*

* Heb. xii. 14. † Epes. ii. 10. Gal. vi. 7. ¶ Rom. viii. 23.

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*My Soul, (said the blessed Jesus) this is the first and great Command. ** Owe no Man any Thing but Love, (says Paul) for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. † If ye fulfil the Royal Law ye do well, (says James.) I write no new Commandment unto you, (says John) but an old Commandment, which ye had from the beginning. Yea we are commanded, to hear Moses and the Prophets, and therefore to obey their Commands, without which the other wou'd be vain and to no purpose. They have Moses and the Prophets, let them bear them. * And altho' this was spoken by Christ to the Jews of his own Time, yet because the Argument of our Lord's Discourse is not special, but general to all, both Jews and Gentiles, who would escape eternal Torment; therefore all such according to our Lord's Direction and Command, must hear Moses and the Prophets.*

Altho' Christian Liberty, my Brethren, frees us from the Curse of the Moral Law,
E e 2 *the*

** Matt. xxii. 36, 37. † Rom. xiii. 8, 9. * Luke. xvi. 29.

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the *Yoke* of the *Ceremonial*, the *Rigour* of the *Jewish Dispensation*, the *Tyranny* of the *Devil*, and *Bondage* of *Sin*, yet it does not free us from the *Necessity* of *Obedience to God*, which is indispensable from every *Creature* considered as such. What tho' Persons be regenerated and adopted, yet they remain *God's Creatures* still; yea these *Mercy's* lay them under greater *Obligations* to *Obedience*: A *Liberty* from *Sin* necessarily infers, the *Servitude* of *Grace*; *Being then made free from Sin, ye became the Servants of Righteousness.* † Yea our *Liberty* consists in *Subjection* to *God*, for it is not a *fleshly Liberty*, that indeed is inconsistent with the *Moral Law*, but a *spiritual Liberty*, which agrees well with it and is inseparable from it. The *Words* of the *Apostle* to the *Galatians* are excellent to this purpose; *For Brethren ye have been call'd to Liberty, only use not Liberty for an occasion to the Flesh.---For all the Law is fulfill'd in one Word, even in this, thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* * Here it is

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† Rom. vi. 18. * Gal. v. 13, 14.

as plain as well can be, that *Paul* judged a Freedom from the Law as a Rule, a fleshly Liberty. And truly so it is, an abominable, filthy Liberty, to be abhor'd by all that fear God!

And why is the Gospel sometimes call'd a Law? *the Law of the Spirit of Life*, but to shew, that there is a wise Constitution of God under the Gospel Dispensation, without a Compliance with which, we can have no Benefit by its gracious Proposals; and also to signify that the Gospel is not without the Moral Law, which is now indeed propos'd to Believers, in a more mild and gentle Dress, than obtain'd under the Jewish OEconomy; but nevertheless it still obliges all rational Creatures to Obedience that enjoy it.

But the perpetual Duration of the Moral Law, as a rule of Life to all intelligent Creatures, appears especially from the following Considerations namely, the Dependence of the Creature upon God; the Nature of its Precepts; the Difference between them and the ceremonial Law as well as from their Conformity to the Divine Nature,

ture, and their *simeness* for Substance with the *Law of Nature*.

That the Creature is necessarily Dependant on God, is a self evident Proposition; for otherwise it would not be a Creature, *In God we live, move and have our Being*. Now, an Obligation to obedience flows necessarily from this, as appears thus: *Jehovah* has a Right to the Creature's Service, not only because of the *Independance, Self-existence* and transcendent *Perfection* of his *Being*, but because he is the Author of the Creature's *Being* and all its *Benefits*. Now seeing the Almighty gave to Man a Capacity to perform Acts of Worship and Obedience to his Creator, it is but reasonable that the Almighty should require his *Due*. And on the Contrary its very unreasonable to imagine that God gave Powers to his Creatures to no purpose, or cast off all Care about them! It is equally absur'd to suppose, either that God should make his rational Creatures for no valuable End, or that he should not propose proper Means to attain it, or cease requiring a Compliance with those Means!

Again,

Again let it be considered, my Brethren. that if the Moral Precepts be alterable, then they are only of a *positive Nature*; and if so, the Almighty might either not have enjoined those Things, or have enjoined the Contrary, and so according to this Scheme the Blessed God might not only have neglected giving a Law to the reasonable Creature to love and Worship him, but have commanded him to blaspheme and disobey his Creator, to believe in no God at all, or to worship false Gods, yea to worship the very Devil himself! And so the worst of Crimes would commence Virtues, *viz. Atheism, Blasphemy, and Lying, &c.* because commanded, which is so monstrous that it needs no Confutation! The Almighty cannot command such Things without denying himself, and contradicting his own Nature: GOD is *Holy and True*, and therefore it is contrary to his Nature to command what is *base and false!*

And indeed, Brethren, if the Precepts of the Moral Law might be disannull'd, there would then be no Difference between it
and

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and the *Ceremonial*, and so no greater Obligation to *Obedience* to the one than the other, and consequently no greater Evil in violating the one than the other; and so the Man that touched a dead Body, or eat swines Flesh, would be guilty of as great a Crime as he that *blasphemed* the *Name of God*, or *murdered* his *Father*, which is quite ridiculous to imagine!

Nor can the *Moral Law* as a *Rule* be destroy'd, because of it's Conformity to the *Divine Nature*, it is the *Rule of God's Image* in Man, in which *Jehovah* has express'd his *Righteousness* and *Holiness*: Now it is unreasonable to think that God would destroy his own Image.

Without Conformity to the *Moral Law* we cannot imitate the *Example of God*, to which we are so frequently urg'd in Scripture, and therefore its Observation is enjoin'd as often as *Holiness* is recommended therein, and especially where we are enjoin'd to imitate God, and *to be Holy because he is Holy*; and thus it follows by a necessary Consequence, that the *Moral Law* is *unalterable*, and of *perpetual Obligation*.

Moreover,

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Moreover, Sirs, the *Moral Law*, as to it's Substance, is the same with the Law of Nature, which is immutable, and founded in the reasonable Nature of Man.

By the *Law of Nature* I understand the *Light of Nature*, or the *practical Notions* of the *Difference between Moral Good and Evil*, which we receive with our Nature; or a practical *Rule of Moral Duties*, which was originally impress'd on the human Mind when Man was first form'd, to which all Mankind are by Nature oblig'd.

Altho' this *Law of Nature* was much broken by the Fall of Man, yet that there be some Remains of it in all, we have abundant Evidence from *Scripture, Conscience*, the *consent of Mankind*, and the *Voice of Reason*.

The Holy Scriptures assure us, that the *Gentiles, who had not the Law*, (i. e. the written Law of Moses) did by Nature the Things contain'd in the Law, and so were a Law to themselves, and shew'd the Work of the Law written in their Hearts. And does not the Conscience of every Man inform him, that Good is to be done, and

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Evil to be avoided? What else is the *Source* of those Uneasinesses for secret Evils which do not fall under the Cognizance of human Laws, with which the Wicked are tormented, and all their brutish Delights allay'd with the Forebodings of future Misery?

If there was no *Law of Nature*, why should the most savage and uncultivated Nations own a supream Being, and that he is to be adored as well as our Parents honour'd, and justice maintain'd? Whence flow all the Laws of Nations respecting Honesty and Justice, if there was no native Rule of Right implanted in the human Mind?

And *Reason* likewise gives its *Suffrage* to the Reality of the Law of Nature thus: Seeing the Creature as such depends unavoidably upon its former, and is govern'd by him *phisically*, it is absur'd to suppose that it should not be govern'd by him also in a *Moral Way*, agreeable to its Nature, which cannot be without a Law. It therefore follows that either Man must be
made

made independant, or have a natural Law impress'd upon his Mind!

And indeed innumerable *Inconsistences* follow the contrary Sentiment, *e. g.* If nothing be in its Nature Just, but that which Men judge profitable to them, then it follows that Men are born for themselves and not for the Glory of that Being to whom they owe their Original! Or for the Good of Society, and then all Things would be equally lawful, to love God, or hate him; to honour our Parents, or cut their Throats! Thus every Man's Lust would be his Rule of Actions, and so a Scene of Confusion and Blood would open to the utter Destruction of the Human Race! If the Law of Nature be destroy'd, my Brethren, then are the Foundations of civil Justice unhing'd, from which Fountains issue Human Laws: Hereby a Way is open'd to *Atheism* in Principle, and the most *sordid Evils* in Practice, so that all *Religion, Virtue, Order and Government* are hereby entirely subverted, and left expiring in the Agonies of Death.

Now the *Law of Nature* and the

Moral Law are the very same in Substance, the same Duties towards God and Man, which are prescrib'd by the *Moral Law*, are contain'd in the *Law of Nature*: The Sum of the *Moral Law*, as I have before observ'd, is to love God and our Neighbour, and this is the very *Law of Nature*: All the Precepts of the *Moral Law* are impress'd on rational Nature, and may be discover'd by its Light: There is nothing in them but right Reason dictates or approves of; nothing but what belongs to all Nations in all Ages of the World; nothing but what is necessary to Human Nature to obtain its proper End, and therefore it ought to be of perpetual Obligation; for rational Nature is ever the same, and like itself, and consequently so must that which is grounded upon it.

The Difference between the *Moral Law* and the *Law of Nature*, is only in *Accidentals* and *Circumstantials* as follows: What is contain'd in the *Law of Nature*, is more clearly and distinctly declar'd in the *Moral Law*. The *Law of Nature* was much obscur'd by the Fall of Man, and therefore

therefore there was need of a Renovation of it : The Law of Nature was wrote upon the Mind of Man, and binds all ; but the Moral Law upon Tables of Stone, and belongs to those that are privileged with the Knowledge of it : The Law of Nature has nothing but what is Moral in it ; but the Moral Law contains some Things that are *positive or ceremonial*, not in its *Precepts* but in the *Arguments* exciting to the Performance of them. Thus the first Command is enforc'd by an Argument of Gratitude peculiar to the *Israelitish* Nation, viz. *God's bringing them out of Egypt*. And so as to the Fourth, tho' the Duty enjoyn'd be Moral, namely the *Dedication* of a *seventh Part* of our Time, or one Day in Seven to the *Worship of God* ; yet the *Specification* of one Day rather than another for that purpose is only positive and therefore alterable ; for there is no real Difference in the several Parts of Time as to their *Nature*, all Time is alike in itself, and therefore equally fit for Religious Worship : And thus it evidently appears that the *Specification* of one Day rather

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rather than another cannot be *moral Natural*, or grounded upon the Nature and Reason of Things. This, learned Mr. *Pool* represents in the following Manner.

“ The Moral Law required no more than
“ one Day of Seven to be kept as a Day
“ of Holy Rest, not this or that particu-
“ lar Day ; the *Jews* learn'd it from the
“ Ceremonial Law, as Christians learn
“ theirs from Christ's and the Apostles
“ Practice. Nor is it any Objection a-
“ gainst this that the seventh Day from
“ the Creation is mentioned in the Law
“ to those who know how to distinguish
“ betwixt the *Precept* and *the Argument*,
“ the Seventh from the Creation is not
“ in the *Precept* but in the *Argument*:
“ *For in Six Days, &c.* Now there is
“ nothing more Ordinary than to have
“ Arguments of a particular temporary Con-
“ cernment used to enforce Precepts of
“ an eternal Obligation ; where the Pre-
“ cepts were first given to that particular
“ People, as to whom those Arguments
“ were of Force, an Instance of which
“ is in the first Commandment as well as

“ in

“ in this : As on the other side Arguments
“ of universal Force are oft annex to Pre-
“ cepts which had but a particular Obli-
“ gation upon a particular People for a
“ Time. Thus in the Ceremonial Law
“ we often find it is an Argument to in-
“ force many Ceremonial Precepts : *For*
“ *I am the Lord thy God.* *

I may add that what has been said is farther confirm'd by an Argument or Ex-
citement of a temporary Nature, which is annex'd to the 5th Commandment,
That thy Days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. This certainly intended the earthly *Canaan* which was promis'd to the *Jews*, and so had something in it peculiar to that Nation which does not extend to us. Now I say excepting those Arguments mentioned, which are annex'd to the First, Fourth, and Fifth Commands, the whole Moral Law is the very same with the Law of Nature, and therefore perpetually binding.

The Law of Nature being *Natural,*
Universal,

* *Vide* Pools Annotations upon Mat. v. 17.

2:2 *It is a perpetual Law.*

Universal, and *Rational*, must needs endure to the last Period of the Line of Time. And the Moral Law being the same in Substance with it, must needs be of the same Duration.

But I proceed to the *Improvement* of this Subject. And *First*: From what has been said, you may learn the Necessity of *preaching* the *Moral Law*, seeing it is a Mean of so many and important Benefits to the Unconverted and Converted, and that those who neglect it do great Injury to the Souls of Men, and use a Mean which tends but to deceive Men and flatter them to their Ruin! He is a foolish *Builder*, that pretends to raise the Fabrick before he lays the Foundation, or attempts to lay it without digging, in order to it. He is a foolish *Physician*, that pretends to cure a Lethargy by Anodynes. He is a foolish *Surgeon*, or something worse, that pretends to cure an old Ulcer without probing it and searching it first. He is also a foolish *Farmer*, that pretends to sow before he plows. To sound the comfortable Strains of Peace and Pardon, and a Saviour's *Blood*,
only

only in the Ears of a secure World ; tho' it pleases them and may possibly move the softer Passions of some ; yet like a *lul-a-by*, it tends to rock or soothe them into a deeper Sleep of Security to their endless Destruction ! Such Preachers *daub with untempered Mortar, and slay the Souls of Men by promising them Life*, as the Prophet expresses it.

Such Ministers as have preach'd the Law most, have been most successful ; witness *Hooker, Hilderham, Baal, Bolton, Rogers*, and an Army of others of precious Memory. And here give me leave to mention the Testimony of one of the most learned and pious Divines of the *English* Nation, I mean the Reverend Doctor *John Owen*, who in his Treatise of Justification speaks thus :

' Let no Man think to understand the
' Gospel, who knoweth nothing of the Law.
' God's Constitution and the Nature of
' Things themselves, have given the Law
' the Precedency with respect unto Sinners ;
' *For by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin ;*
' and Gospel-Faith is the Souls acting for

‘ Deliverance from that State and Condi-
 ‘ tion, which it is cast under by the Law.
 ‘ And all those Descriptions of Faith,
 ‘ which abound in the Writings of *learned*
 ‘ *Men*, which do not at least include
 ‘ in them a virtual Respect unto this State
 ‘ and Condition, or the Work of the
 ‘ Law on the Consciences of Sinners, are
 ‘ all of them vain Speculations! There is
 ‘ nothing in this Doctrine which I will
 ‘ more firmly adhere unto than the Necessity
 ‘ of the Convictions mentioned, previous
 ‘ unto true believing, without which, not
 ‘ one Line of it can be understood aright,
 ‘ and Men do but beat the Air in their Con-
 ‘ tentions about it.’ * If any will call us
 legal Preachers, because we preach the
 Law; we Answer, that we follow our
 Lord’s Example in so doing, and if they
 will reproach us for our imitating him, we
 hope our Master will support us under
 those unjust Censures, that condemn his
 Practice as well as ours, and in such Com-
 pany we need neither be afraid or ashamed.

Secondly:

* *Vide Owen of Just. p. 133.*

Secondly: We may learn that there is a beautiful Harmony between the Law and Gospel, they mutually honour and establish each other. The *Law* sends us to *Christ* for *Justification*, and *Christ* sends us back to the *Law* for *Direction*. The *Law* helps us to see the absolute Need of the Gospel, and the Gospel opens before us the transcendent Excellency of the *Law*. O let us admire the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Holiness and Love of God, display'd in this *Harmony*!

Thirdly: From what has been said, we may learn the Danger of rejecting the *Law* of God. This strikes at the Foundations of the Christian Religion, and directly tends to destroy it entirely! For

Hereby an awful *Bar* is put in the Way of *Conviction*, *Faith*, *Repentance*, *Conversion*, *Justification*, *Consolation*, and so by consequence of *eternal Salvation*! How shall poor Sinners be convinc'd if that *Law* be destroy'd by which is the Knowledge of Sin? And is there any probability that such as are whole in their own Eyes, will apply in earnest to *Christ* for a *Cure*?

Or that those who see no Danger, will fly by Faith to the Refuge set before them?

If there be no Law there can be no Transgression of it, or in other Words, no Sin: And if there be no Sin, what need is there of Repentance? Shall People repent over what is not? No surely! And what need is there of a *Saviour*, to deliver from nothing?

And if the *Moral Law* is destroy'd, does not Justification fall with it? For is not that a Sentence judicially pronounc'd according to Law? And how cruel and pernicious is it to rob poor Sinners of a Mean of their Conversion to God?

Neither can there be any such Thing as Sanctification or Holiness upon Earth, without the Moral Law. For what is Sanctification, but an inward and outward Conformity thereto, or a renewing us after the Image of God, which is his Law? Without this, all *Acts of Virtue and Religion*, inasmuch as they are neither requir'd by God, nor done in Obedience to his commanding Authority, (according to the Scheme I propose) are all *Superstition* and
Will-

Will-worship ; and consequently instead of being pleasing to God, do provoke his Indignation ; because they imply a Reflection upon his Wisdom, Goodness or Fidelity ; as if he either knew not how to furnish his Creatures with a perfect Law for their Direction, or wanted Goodness and Faithfulness to act in pursuance of his Wisdom !

When Men reject the Law of God, they renounce Interpretatively, his Dominion over them, and commence their own Lord's and Masters. , And as to their Acts of Virtue and Religion, this Query spoils them all, *Who hath required these Things at your Hands ?* And how shall those that are converted, prize Christ as a Fountain, when the *Glass* that discovers their Blemishes is broken and cast away ? Or how shall they live daily upon his Offices, without a Sight of their Need of them ?

Nor is *Ignorance* of our Sins in Heart and Life, the Way to true and real Humility : For how shall those be discovered to us, without comparing our selves with that Law of God, of which Sin is a Transgression ?

And are we like to extol the Glory of pure pardoning Grace, while the Sins forgiven are hid from our View by rejecting the Law of God?

Is there any Perfection of the blessed God, more venerable and amiable than his Holiness? Of this the Seraphs shout with Joy and Transport, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts!* And certainly a Gladness, and Satisfaction arises to the Saints on Earth in some degree from a View thereof. Now does it not tend to mar their Joy and Satisfaction in this Attribute, when the *Law*, that Image of the divine *Purity* is rejected? *Surely in keeping God's Commands there is a great Reward.*

If our *Peace* and *Joy* be not built upon a right *Foundation*, they are worse than none. And is the *Foundation* like to be well laid, while we are ignorant of our Sins thro' a Slight of the Law of God, the appointed Mean of Self-Knowledge?

Not to say that it is hard to conceive how any should be acquitted at the last
Day,

Day, if that Law were destroy'd which is to be the Rule of Judgment.

From what has been said, considered complexly, methinks this Conclusion naturally and freely flows, *viz.* That the rejecting the *Moral Law*, directly tends to destroy all *Religion* and *Vertue* at one dreadful *Stroak*, and consequently, to plunge Mankind in a Deluge of Impiety, Confusion and Ruin? *To the Law and to the Testimony* (as the Prophet *Isaiab* speaks) *If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.* * The Lord complains and threatens by the Prophet *Hosea* in the following Language: *My People are stroyed for lack of Knowledge. Because thou hast rejected Knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me: Seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of thy God, I will also forget thy Children.* † The Words of God by the Prophet *Malachi* are likewise remarkable upon this Head: *For the Priests Lips shall keep Knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his Mouth;*
---But

* *Isai.* viii. 20.

† *Hos.* 4. 6.

---But ye have departed out of the Way, ye have caused many to stumble at the Law, therefore have I made you also contemptible and base before all the People, according as ye have not kept my Ways, but have been partial in the Law. * And our Lord himself in his Sermon on the Mount, after he had asserted, that he came not to destroy the Law,----and that not one jot or Tittle shou'd pass from it till Heaven and Earth pass, he says, *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.* † If it be objected against what has been spoken upon this Subject, That the *Life of Christ* is a sufficient *Rule* without the Law, I answer: If Christ had sustain'd all the Characters or Relations that are among Men, for any considerable Space of Time, and all that he had said and done had been recorded; no doubt it would have been

* Mal. ii. 7, 8, 9. † Mat. x. 17, 18, 19.

a compleat Explication of the Law, and therefore, a perfect Directory for our Practice. But inasmuch as Jesus Christ did not sustain all Relations, had but a short abode in the World, and many Things he said and did are not recorded; therefore his Life is not a sufficient Rule to us without the Law; neither do we find that it is any where recommended to us in Scripture as such: His Practice was entirely perfect and without Stain, and therefore so far as it is reveal'd to us, it is both our Honour, our Duty, and our Priviledge to imitate it, (excepting such extraordinary Cases that concern'd him peculiarly as Mediator) but what is not reveal'd we know not, and therefore cannot imitate.

Nor is it reasonable and safe for us to follow our *Hearts* as Rules or Guides, seeing they are by Nature *deceitful and desperately Wicked*. And there are too much of the Remains thereof in the best of Men, which *Paul* bewail'd over in very moving Strains; saying, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death?* And *Peter* was so far deceiv'd

by it, as to dissuade his Lord from suffering! Yea all the Apostles were so sensible of it, that they *groan'd within themselves, waiting for the Redemption of their Bodies!* The Case being so, *Solomon* justly observes, that *he who trusts in his Heart is a Fool,* simple indeed in the worst Sense.

And to expect the Direction of God's Spirit, while we neglect or contemn the Means God has appointed for our Instruction, is great and dangerous *Presumption;* for all these Things God will be enquir'd of. *i. e.* apply'd to in the Use of proper Means. To follow immediate *Impulses* either wholly without the Scriptures, or without examining such Passages thereof as are brought to our Minds by the sober Use of our *Reason*, in comparing Scripture with Scripture, and considering the Consequences of different Interpretations, and their Agreement with or Disagreement from the *Analogy* of Faith, exposes to all Manner of Inconsistency and Delusion: The Devil has hereby an awful Opportunity to betray us into the most perilous Principles, under the Appearance of an Angel of
Light,

Light, or guise of Truth and Good, and we have no Defentative : For without the humble Use of *Reason*, how can we try the Spirits by the Word, or have any just and consistent Apprehension of its meaning? In short by this Notion the Scriptures are rendered Useless to us in Effect; for its much alike whether we want the Scriptures altogether, or want the true Knowledge of them in *Fundamentals* : For it is by the Notion we have of the Meaning of the Scriptures that we are directed in Practice, and not by them considered absolutely. It's absurd to suppose, that an infinitely Wise God would first give *Reason* to his Creatures, and then order them to cast it entirely away in order to become Religious; that is, first to commence *Beasts* before they become Christians.

But some object against the *Law*, that Place of Scripture in the Epistle of *Paul* to the *Galatians*, where it is said, *That the Law is not of Faith*. I answer with *Turretine* : “ That the Law is said not to be of Faith, not as it is taken largely for

“ the whole *Mosaick* OEconomy, but
 “ strictly for the Moral Law abstracted
 “ and separated from the Promises of Grace,
 “ in which Sente the Self-righteous *Jews*
 “ understood it, who sought Life by it;
 “ for that Faith was commanded in the
 “ *Sinai* Covenant is evinc'd.”

Let us therefore, my dear Brethren! be
 entreated to esteem and value God's holy
 Law, whatever Contempt others cast upon
 it; let it be dear to us to the Death, more
 precious than fine Gold, and sweeter than
 Honey!

O Brethren! let us avoid with all Care
 and Caution, the *Abuses* of the *Law* before
 mentioned; beware that ye depend not
 upon your Obedience to it for acceptance
 with God: And likewise take care that
 ye do not oppose Law and Gospel to each
 other, or advance the one to the others
 prejudice, for in so doing ye wound the
 Christian Religion, as well as your own
 Souls exceedingly! O there is a sweet Har-
 mony between them, which we have rea-
 son to admire and adore God for! And
 indeed the Thoughts and Knowledge of
 this

this blessed *Harmony* and mutual Subser-
vency, tends to strengthen our Belief in
the Divinity of the Christian Religion!

O ye unconverted Souls! use and apply
the Law's Threatnings to alarm you out
of your Iron Slumbers. Let the *legal*
Lancet run into your secure Hearts and
open your Wounds, that ye may be sick
of Sin and flee to Jesus!

Surely it is Ignorance of God's Law that
makes some despise it. If we may slight
that, we may also the whole Old Testa-
ment with it, which is for the most part
but an Explication thereof. And if the
Old Testament be destroy'd, what shall
become of the New that is built on that
Foundation? Let us therefore study the
Law, and pray to God that he wou'd shew
us the Breadth of it, and wonders con-
tain'd in it.

Let the People of God be entreated to
observe it as the Rule of their Practice.
Obey it, dear Brethren! from a Principle
of Love to God, and with an Eye to his
Glory: And lean on Jesus by Faith, that
for

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The Improvement.

for his sake your Imperfections may be pardon'd and your Acts of Obedience accepted; and thus ye may expect that Peace will be upon you and the *Israel* of God. Which may God grant for Christ's Sake.
Amen.



Vindicæ Operum :

O R, T H E

Necessity of GOOD WORKS Vindicated.

T W O

S E R M O N S,

On PHIL. ii. 12, 13.

P R E A C H ' D A T

PHILADELPHIA,

MARCH 24th, 1744-5.

By GILBERT TENNENT, A. M.

Minister of the Gospel in *Philadelphia.*

² Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, --- 11. *And besides this, giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Vertue; and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly-Kindness; and to Brotherly-Kindness, Charity.--- For so an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

PHILADELPHIA: Printed by W. BRADFORD, at the Bible in Second Street, 1745.

S E R M O N I.

PHILIP. ii. 12, 13.

Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure.

THE Design of Knowledge in Religion, my Brethren, is *Practice*; and without the latter, the former will only serve to encrease our present Guilt and future Punishment: *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is Sin.* ¶ *And that Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes.* *

I i

Nor

¶ Jam. iv. 17.

* Luke xii. 47.

Nor have the People of God any Writ of Exemption from Obedience to their Creator and Father. It is so far from this, that they are under special Engagements thereto, by Reason of the distinguishing Expressions of God's Kindness towards them.

This the Text which I have chosen to discourse upon at present, represents in strong Terms: To understand which, let it be considered, that the Apostle therein addresses the Saints at *Philippi*, † and exhorts them to practical Holiness by divers Arguments.

Having mentioned in the Preceding Verses, the Obedience and Humiliation of Christ, together with the blessed Fruits thereof, he takes occasion from thence, to excite them to religious Diligence and humble Holiness. *Let this Mind (i. e. humble Mind) be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Who being in the Form of God-----took upon him the Form of a Servant.*

† i chap. i ver. *Philippi*, a City in Macedonia, on the Confines of Thracia, seated on a little Hill near the *Pargian* Mountain. *Appian*

*want. --- and became obedient unto Death. ---
Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and
given him a Name above every Name. ---*

It is as if the Apostle shou'd say, Seeing the blessed Jesus who is God over all, has, to purchase our Salvation, assum'd human Nature in its humblest Form, and became obedient therein to the Law to Death, and that of the most abasing and formidable Kind ; ye shou'd be hence induc'd to use all Diligence, to get the purchas'd Salvation apply'd really and satisfactorily to your own Souls at present, as well as to obtain encreasing Meetness, for the full Enjoyment of it in the Life to come.

And to encourage them herein, the Apostle not only uses an endearing Compellation in his Address, but prudently commends them for their past Diligence ; † *Wherefore my beloved, as you have always obey'd, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. Work out your own Salvation.* He excites them to persevering Obedience to God's Law and Gospel, and especially

† *Virtus laudata crescit, Vertue prais'd grows.*

pecially in his absence, that so it might appear to all, that not meerly a Reverence to their Pastor, but a prevailing Love to Christ and their own Souls constrain'd their Obedience ; and likewise because in his Absence their Danger was encreas'd, thro' the Want of his Councils and the Presence of Seducers. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure.* These Words contain three Things worthy of Observation, viz. I. *A Duty is enjoyned, Work.* II. *The Manner of performing it is prescrib'd, work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.* And III. *Arguments exciting hereto are mentioned ; It is your own Salvation, and it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure.* I shall therefore in discoursing upon this Subject, endeavour to explain the aforesaid Particulars, and then proceed to the Improvement.

I. *The Duty enjoyn'd, is pactical Holiness, or Obedience to God's Law.* And hence the Apostle commends them for their Obedience,

ence, in the first Part of the Verse; *Wherefore my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed.---*

Here it may be enquir'd, what is requir'd to acceptable Obedience? (or good Works.)

I answer these four Things are necessary to constitute it; namely, a good Principle, a good End, a good Rule, and a good Mode. And

First. There must a good Principle, viz. a renew'd, believing Heart. And hence the Apostle observes to Timothy, *That the End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and Faith unfeign'd.* * And our Lord informs us, *That a good Man out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth good Things: And an evil Man out of the evil Treasure, bringeth forth evil Things.* † And that a corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit. ‡ But that whatsoever is born of the Flesh is Flesh. ¶ And the Apostle Paul informs us, *That he that is in the Flesh cannot please God.*

* 1 Tim. i. 5. † Matt. xii. 35. ‡ Mat. vii. 18.
§ John iii.

God. * And that *without Faith it is impossible to please him.* † Unless the Fountain be good, the Streams cannot be so that proceed from it. The Salt of converting Grace must therefore be cast into the Spring of our Action, and as our Saviour directs us, *we must make the Tree good, that the Fruit may be good.* But

Secondly. Another Thing that is necessary to constitute a good Work, is a *good End*, and that is the *Glory of God*: To this as our highest Mark or Scope, all our Actions, whether natural, civil or religious shou'd be directed; and to this, every Thing else shou'd be subordinated; *Whether in eating or drinking, or whatsoever we do, we should do it all to the Glory of God.* † For the want of this, the Worship of the *Pharisees*, tho' specious in appearance, was rejected. ¶ In all religious Actions, we should more especially, actually intend God's Glory; for our aiming at the chief Good shou'd then be most express, and not interrupted by any other Intentions.

But

* Rom. viii. 8. † Heb. xi. 6. † 1 Cor. x. 31. ¶ Mat. v. 20.

But in civil and temporary Matters, it is not precisely necessary, that the Glory of God be always actually intended (tho' that shou'd be attempted as much as may be.) If in the mean time, the Glory of God be the virtual and general Scope, to which all our Works are referr'd. Our dear Redeemer lays much Stress upon the Sincerity of our Intentions, and informs us, that *our Eye be single our whole Body is full of Light*, but if otherwise, *full of Darkness*: i. e. If in the Course of our Actions we do not aim at God's Glory above all, it is an Evidence of our being in a dark and dismal State towards God!

Thirdly. A good Rule is likewise necessary to constitute a good Work, or acceptable Obedience. Now this Rule is the Law of God, not ceremonial, which directed the Worship of the Jews, in Things peculiar to the Infant State of the Church, under that (comparatively) dark and terrible OEconomy. Forasmuch as that prefigured the Mediator to come, as the Shadow the Body, he being come it is abrogated. *

Nor

* Col. ii. 16, 17.

Nor is this Rule the *Judicial Law*, which directed the *Jewish Commonwealth* in civil Matters, forasmuch as that was in a great Measure peculiarly adapted to the political State and Circumstances of that Nation, which were in some respects singular, particularly considered as a *Theocracy*, and under a ceremonious Dispensation, and was never given to the Gentile World as a Rule of Judgment, but to the *Jewish*, it necessarily follows, that it must expire with the Dissolution of the *Jewish State*. (at least so far as it peculiarly respected it) Nor are we under any formal Obligation to a Law, that was never impos'd upon us by divine Authority, or ever was adapted in many of its Stroaks to our Circumstances. The grand Design of the Scriptures, is not to suggest general Maxims of civil Policy, but Rules of holy Living. The Scope of the sacred Volumn is not to make us subtle *Politicians*, but sincere *Christians*; not to give us Rules of Judging about the Rights of Kings to their Crowns, but to direct us in the Way to a Crown of Life that shall never fade away.

It remains therefore, that it is the *Moral Law* that is the perpetual *Rule* of *human Action*; this therefore we must have in view in our sacred Service, and to this unalterable Scale of Holiness, we must strictly and invariably conform, * and without a Regard to this, in our Acts of Obedience; *in vain do we worship God, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* † *Wherefore* (says the Apostle to the *Colossians*,) *if ye be dead with Christ, from the Rudiments of the World; why-----are ye subject to Ordinances; touch not, taste not, handle not, (which are to all perish with the using) after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men? Which Things have indeed a Shew of Wisdom, in will Worship, and Humility.* ‡ To all such, the Almighty God may propose the following silencing Question; *Who hath required this at your Hand?* ¶

Fourthly. Another Ingredient in a good Work, is a good *Mode*, or *Manner* of Performance;

K k

formance;

* Deut. iv. 2. Is. viii. 20. Gal. vi. 16. † Mar. xv. 9.
‡ Col. ii. 20,----23. ¶ Il. i. 12.

258 *Why Obedience is call'd a Work*
formance; *i. e.* It must not be only out-
wardly, but inwardly conformed to the
Law of God, which is a spiritual Law,
and requires Purity in the Thoughts and
Dispositions of the Soul. *

Now *Obedience* to God's Law is call'd a
Work in our Text, to signify its *Difficulty*,
and the *Pains* that must be taken to per-
form it to purpose.

We have many Things to do, in relati-
on to God, our Neighbour and our selves;
which to perform in their proper Season
and order, in a constant and harmonious
Series, is attended with no little Difficulty!

Yea the very Duties that respect our
selves, are numerous and not of easy Per-
formance; to use all appointed Means with
seriousness and steadiness, to obtain a *Prin-*
ciple of Grace, to pluck out our right Eyes,
and cut off our right Arms: i. e. To for-
sake our darling Sins, which are to us,
while unrenow'd, in respect of affection,
like those Members of our Bodies. O how
hard and Difficult is it!

And

* Rom. vii.

And when converted, to continue in the steadfast and earnest Use of all instituted Means, in order to obtain the *exercise* of every *Grace* proper for all the various Occasions of Life, as well as to attain and retain the *Growth* of *Grace*, the *Assurance* of *Grace*, and *Perseverance* therein to the End : and that contrary to the Tendency of strong *Corruptions* from within, and innumerable *Temptations* from the Devil and World without. (*i. e.* both in respect of the Objects of it, and the Men of it) is exceeding Difficult.

And it is peculiarly so to *deny ourselves* ; to *undo all* that we have done amiss by repeated Acts of *Penitence* ; to *crucify* our *vicious Propensities* ; to maintain a humble *Confidence* in God ; a transcendant *Affection* to him, and unfailing *Complacence* in him, in the Midst of Sins, of Sorrows and Temptations of various Forms : And hence it is that our Lord compares acceptable Obedience or sincere Holiness to a *straight Gate* and *narrow Way*, and assures us, that but few (*i. e.* comparatively) are possessors of it, *Enter ye in at the*

Why call'd a Work of Salvation. 260
Strait Gate ; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be that go in thereat ; because *strait* is the Gate, and narrow the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it. * And elsewhere we are inform'd that the Righteous are scarcely (i. e. difficultly) saved. †

Again it is call'd a *Work of Salvation*, to shew us the *Necessity* of Obedience in order to the Possession of Salvation in the future World, as well as the *inseparable Connection*, by Virtue of Divine Promise between *Good Works* or Holiness here and *Happiness* hereafter.

Sometimes the Word *Salvation* in Scripture intends no more but a *Deliverance* from some great *Danger* or Calamity : And thus when *Israel* were environ'd round with inextricable Difficulties, the *Egyptian Army* behind them, and the *Red Sea* before them, and impervious Eminencies or impassible Mountains on each Side, *Moses* bid them *stand still and see the Salvation of God.*

* Mat. vii. 13, 14. † 1 Pet. iv. 13. *Actis.*

What the Word Salvation signifies. 261

God. But more generally the Word *Salvation*, signifies a *spiritual Deliverance* from Sin, and the Miseries consequent upon it, begun by Grace here, and perfected in Glory hereafter. When our Lord visited *Zaccheus*, and conferr'd spiritual Mercy's upon him, he inform'd him, that *that Day, Salvation came to his House : i. e.* At that Time, a Right to Salvation was confer'd upon him by Justification, and the Beginnings of Salvation were implanted in him by Regeneration and Consolation. But the Word generally signifies the *full Enjoyment* of God in the Life to come ; and in this Sense it is undoubtedly to be taken in our Text. *Work out your own Salvation : i. e.* diligently Study and faithfully Perform these Duties that relate to your eternal Salvation ; that tend to clear up your Title to it, and make you meet for the Possession of it. This Phrase does in strong Terms represent, the Necessity and Usefulness of the good Works of the Faithful to promote their Salvation ; and hence it is frequently represented to us as a *Reward*, which is not meeted out to us for our Works, but according

262 *What the Word Salvation signifies,*
according to them; God will render to every one according to his Works; to them who by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Immortality eternal Life. *

But in vain do the *Papists* infer a Merit of Works from this Text! The good Works of the Saints, cannot deserve eternal Happiness, for the following Reasons:

1st. Because they are imperfect, all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags: Imperfection cleaves to the best of our Services, on which Account we need Forgiveness, as our Lord informs us in the Pattern of Prayer he has given us, and therefore cannot merit any good at the Hand of God.

2dly. Believers owe all to God, and therefore can merit nothing of him, by offering to him what is his own. They are God's Servants; † they are not their own but bought with a Price: Now it is the Property of a Servant not to be *Sui Juris*, at his own Dispose or Command. They cannot dispose of themselves or their Time, or their Work, because all these belong to their Master;

* Rom. ii. 6, 7. † Luke xvii. 10.

Master: And how then can they deserve any thing by doing what they are bound to do? And hence our Lord speaks to his Disciples in the following Words; *Likewise when ye shall have done all these Things that are commanded you, say we are unprofitable Servants: WE HAVE DONE THAT WHICH WAS OUR DUTY TO DO. ‡* If a Master rewards his Servant for doing his Duty, it must be pure Liberality and not Merit.

Besides, Believers receive all the Good they possess from God, *It is God that worketh in them, to will and to do of his own good Pleasure, and they have nothing but what they have receiv'd. * Who hath first given to God and it shall be recompensed to him again? †* The Case being so, they cannot possibly merit, by returning to God what is his own, for that is but an Act of Justice. Again

3dly. Good Works are rewarded meerly out of God's Mercy and pure Grace, and therefore not of Merit, for these are opposed to

264 *Good Works: not meritorious.*

to each other; and hence we are told, that it is not by Works of Righteousness that we have done, but thro' his Mercy he hath saved us. ¶

4tly. *Eternal Life* is given to Believers, by Way of *Inheritance*, and therefore not by way of *Merit*; for the one is a Gift and the other is a Purchase; *If Children then Heirs, Heirs of God and joynt Heirs with Christ.* * *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.* † *i. e.* If Salvation be confer'd for our Obedience to the Law, it is no more of Promise.

5tly. The good Works of Believers are not equal in value to eternal Life, and therefore cannot deserve it; for I reckon (says the Apostle) that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us. ‡

Now the Sufferings which the Saints of choice endure for Christ, are the best Instances

¶ Tit. iii. 5. * Rom. viii. 17. † Gal. iii. xviii.
‡ Rom. iii. 18.

stances of their Obedience; and therefore if those do not merit Happiness, far less their other Services. In order to demerit, there must be an Equality in Worth between the Work and the Reward; but the Reward is infinite in Value and Duration, and our Works are both finite and imperfect; now between these there is no Proportion of Equality, but on the contrary an infinite Disproportion.

6thly. *Eternal Life is the Gift of God; and therefore not deserved by our Good Works; It is your Fathers good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom. ‡ The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life.** Observe the Antithesis between the two; Death is inflicted in a way of Justice as the desert of Sin, as the Wages of a Hireling are due for his Work. But eternal Life is the Gift of God, free and altogether undeserved by us: Gift or Grace and Debt are certainly oppos'd; what we properly owe, we cannot be said properly to give, and so *e contra*.-----

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I may add, that seeing the Saints cannot do any thing that *profits* the *Almighty*, or *recompence* him for Benefits receiv'd, it is unreasonable to imagine that they should merit more ; *Our Goodness does not extend to God, neither is it any Gain to him that we are righteous.* If a Son cannot return equal to his Father, for the Being he hath receiv'd instrumentally from him, how much less can he requite God, from whom he hath originally receiv'd his all ?

And indeed the Papal Notion of *Merit* is *Dis honourable*, both to *God*, the *Father* and the *Son* !

It eclipses the Fathers *Liberality*, and subjects him to his Creature. The greater any good is, the more communicative and liberal it is. Now he that gives freely, is more liberal than him that gives out of Debt or Desert.

And he that owes another, (according to Justice) is in some Measure subject to him ; *the Borrower* (as *Solomon* observes) *is Servant to the Lender.* † And therefore
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† Prov. xxii. 7.

if the Almighty be a Debtor to fallen Man, on Account of any Merit in his Works, he would not act so freely as if no such Obligation lay upon him.

Nor can the *Merits of Works* be clear'd of derogating from the *Redeemers Glory*; for whoever merits any Thing, acquires a Right either in whole or in part to that which he had not before, and thus there wou'd be something in eternal Life which Christ had not merited, which is absurd in it self and inglorious to Christ! It is in vain to pretend that Christ hath purchas'd for his People a Power of meriting, for this is in other Words to say, that the Satisfaction of Christ is incompleat, and that he needs the Help of others to perfect what he left unfinished! It is more for the Redeemers Honour to purchase all himself, than to enable others to do it, either in whole or in part: As he is more bountiful who gives another a large Inheritance out of his own proper Goods, than he that enables him to purchase an Estate by his Labour.

To *work* Salvation does not signify to *effect* it, but to labour about it, to do those things that have a Relation to it; and in this Sente the original Word is frequently taken in Scripture. *

But tho' from what has been said it appears, that the *Popish* Notion of the Merit of Works cannot be fairly inferr'd from these Words; yet they strongly assert the *Necessity* of good Works in order to *Salvation*, against the *Antinomians* and *Liber-tines*.

To understand which, let it be observ'd, that Works may be considered in a *three-fold Light*, viz. as respecting *Justification*, *Sanctification* or *Glorification*. In respect of *Justification*, they are neither *antecedents*, *efficient* or *meritorious Causes*, but *Consequents* and *declarative Signs*: In respect of *Sanctification*, they are *Ingredients* that constitute and promote it: In respect of *Glorification*, they are *Antecedents* and *Means*, which tend to promote our *Meetness* for the Possession of it; they bear the
Relation

* *Exod. vi. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 13. Rev. xviii. 17.*
Vide Poli. Synop. in Loc.

Relation to it of a *Way* to the *End* of a Journey, of the beginning of a Thing to its full *Completion*: For *Grace* is the beginning of *Glory*, as *Glory* is the *Consumation* of *Grace*. But to confirm and illustrate this important Point, let the following particulars, respecting the necessity of *Good Works*, be duly weighed, *viz.*

1st. *Good Works* are *Necessary*, as the *Way* to the *Kingdom* of *Heaven* by divine Appointment, tho' they are not the Cause of our reigning there, as *Bernard* excellently observes. And hence we are said to be *his Workmanship*, created in *Christ Jesus* unto *Good Works*, which *God* hath before ordained that we should walk in them. * And elsewhere we are told, that without *Holiness* no *Man* shall see the *Lord*. † Tho' eternal Blessedness be not strictly and properly a Reward, yet it is given in some respect after the Manner of a Reward: Inasmuch as the *Elect* are not admitted to the Possession of it (ordinarily) till they have laboured for *God*,
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* Ephes. ii. 10.

† Heb. xii. 14.

nor are they treated as Conquerors, until they have fought *Jehovah's* Battles, they must run the Race of Holiness before they possess the rest of the Crown of Happiness: And hence the Apostle informs the *Thes-salonians*, that God from the Beginning chose them to Salvation thro' the Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth. *

2dly. *Good Works*, or Obedience to the Law of God, make us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. † Besides a Right to the Inheritance, a Meetness to enjoy it; is also necessary, which consists in a Temper of Mind fitted for, or attemper'd to the Businets and Enjoyments of the heavenly State, without which they cannot make us Happy. Now this *Temper of Mind*, which is so necessary from the Nature of Things, in order to our Happiness, is *Holiness* in Heart; which is encreas'd by *Good Works*. The actual Exercise of Grace has a natural Tendency to enlarge and confirm the Principle of Grace as well as engages the Promise

* 2 Thes. ii. 13.

† Col. i. 12.

Promise of Divine Influence to that End: And hence the Almighty has told us by the Prophet *Ishaiab*, that *he will meet those that wait upon him in his Way, and work Righteousness.* * And elsewhere we are commanded *to ask*; and informed that in so doing, *we shall receive.* † Doing Good is certainly the Way to grow better, we get Grace while we act it, the more we use our Limbs, the more nimble we grow; abounding in good Works, encreases the Principle from which they proceed, and so ripens us for Glory; *Those that wait upon God shall renew their Strength.* ‡ And tho' the blessed God is the principle Efficient, in preparing us for future Blessedness, yet under him we act, and with him we concur, being *drawn we run, and thro' his Spirit we mortify the Deeds of the Body, that we may live.*

3dly. Good Works are necessary to evidence our Faith, our Love our Sincerity; and hence is that notable Expression of the Apostle *James, Shew me thy Faith without thy*

* Isa. lxiv. 45. † Mat. vii. 7. ‡ Isai. xl. 31.

thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works. Tho' Faith as it works does not justify, yet it is only a working Faith that does justify. That Faith is only of the right Stamp, that purifies the Heart and Works by Love. Now seeing Faith is the Root of good Works, by these Fruits therefore, we must discern the Tree from which they spring. Our Love is likewise hereby evidenc'd to be real, and not in Word and in Tongue only; If ye love me, (says our Lord) keep my Commandments.--- And he that saith he loveth me, and keepeth not my Commandments, is a Lyer, and the Truth is not in him.

And do not good Works make our Sincerity evident, not only to others but to our selves? To this purpose *Hezekiah* mentions them, when he had received a Message of Death by the Prophet; *I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight.* * Yea my Brethren, good Works do

* 2 Kings xx. iii.

do evidence our eternal Election and effectual Vocation; and hence we are enjoyn'd, to give Diligence to make our calling and Election sure, and inform'd, that if we do these Things we shall never fall, but have an abundant Entrance ministred to us, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *

4thly. Good Works are necessary to glorify God, to imitate Christ, to Comfort our selves and edify our Neighbour; Herein (said the blessed Jesus) is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit, so shall ye be my Disciples. † The more the Beauty of Grace appears, the more God is glorified; now it opens its Oriency and unfolds its Riches and Charms when it is exercised in good Works. Grace in the Creature, is but the Imitation of some divine Attribute in God to which it corresponds; and therefore the more we exercise it in Works of Piety and Charity, the more we manifest Jehovah's Excellencies, or as the Apostle phraseth it, *shew forth his Virtues.* ‡ And thence

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it is evident, that good Works are the most effectual Way of glorifying God, because they offer the most convincing Demonstration of his adorable Excellencies to Men.

It is certainly our *Duty* as well as *Privilege*, to *imitate* the *blessed Jesus*; and hence we are commanded, *so to walk even as he walked.* * And he is said, *to have left us an Example, that we should follow his Steps.* Now Jesus Christ obey'd the Law, and therefore so must we, *if we say we abide in him*: The dear Redeemer was not only inherently, but actively holy, *he went about doing good.*

Moreover, *good Works* promote our own *Comfort* exceedingly, and that not only as they are the Way, in which we can only expect, with Reason, the Fulfilment of God's gracious Promises towards us; but as they prevent much Guilt, which would be contracted by spiritual Sloth, and farther our Assurance of being in a gracious State! Surely *to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will be shewn the Salvation of God.*

* 1 John ii. 6.

God. † Negligence grieves the blessed Spirit, *wherby we are sealed to the Day of Redemption*; causes the Life of Grace to languish, and blots our Evidences for Heaven. But on the contrary, *good Works*, give a *Spring* to our Joy in God, by giving Evidence to the Sincerity of our Faith in him, as well as the Reality of our other Graces. Habits are known by their Actings, and we judge of a Fountain by its Streams. Now it is the Knowledge of our Covenant Interest in God, that is the Source of Sweetness; the Comfort of a Believer ebbs and flows with that; and therefore those that desire the Comfort of Grace, must be diligent in the Exercise of Grace. I might add, that the *Approbation of Conscience* in a *Course of religious Labour*, together with the grateful *Gust*, that attends the *Exercise of Grace* therein, is no small Part of a Christians Delight, and therefore no inconsiderable Incentive to *good Works*.

Again, my Brethren, our Neighbours *Edification* is promoted by *good Works*; and

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hence our Lord enjoyns us, *to let our Light so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven.* * And we are likewise bid *to shine as Lights in the World, that those who seek to accuse our good Conversation in Christ, may be ashamed: i. e.* Thro' their not finding just Matter of Accusation against us. The Apostle *Peter* exhorts *Wives* to the Performance of their Duty, *that by their Conversation their Husbands may be won to Christ.* † By these Instances it appears, that good Works have a noble Tendency to excite Men to glorify God, to silence Gainfayers, and to bring Men to Conversion.

5thly. Good Works are pleasing to God; to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased. ‡ The Holy God delights in Holiness, and in those good Works which are the proper Fruits of it; hence is that of the Psalmist, *the righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, his Countenance beholdeth the upright.* ¶ God delights

* Mat. v. 16. † 1 Pet. iii. 1. ‡ Heb xiii. 16. ¶ Ps. xi. 7.

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delights first in himself, and next in his
nearest Resemblance, which is Holiness,
Good Works come from God, an' there-
fore no Wonder he Delights in them!

Having spoken upon the Duty enjoyn'd
in our Text, I proceed to Discourse upon
*the Manner of performing it therein pre-
scrib'd*, which is the

II. *General Head.* Now we should per-
form the Duties of Obedience required of
us.

1st. *Painfully and Earnestly*: This is
doubtless intended by the Word *Work*; and
hence we are commanded in other Places
of Scripture, *to strive to enter in at the
strait Gate*; and inform'd, *that many shall
seek to enter in but shall not be able.* * The
original Word signifies to agonize: *i. e.*
to labour as in an Agony. † We are
likewise commanded, *to run so that we
may obtain.* ‡ *So to fight that we may lay
hold on eternal Life.* ¶ *So to wrestle, that
we may be able to stand.* ** And we are
dehorted

* Luke xiii. 24. † *Agonidzeisibe.* ‡ 1 Cor. ix. 24.
§ 1 Tim. vi. 12. ** Ephs. vi. 11, 12.

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dehorted from *fainting in our Minds,* and
growing *wearry in well-doing*; and assur'd,
that we shall reap if we faint not. † And
are not *the fervent Prayers of the Righteous,*
said to avail much? Now have all those
Expressions no Meaning? Or can we strive,
run, wrestle and fight, by loitering or
doing nothing? Pray is there any Need to
caution us against *fainting, and growing*
wearry in well doing, if we have no Work
to do at all?

2dly. We must *labour perseveringly*;
Work out the Work of your Salvation; per-
fect what ye have begun, continue in your
religious Course, until ye reach the *Mark,*
It is in the second Creation as in the first;
God does not finish his Work at once, but
by Degrees. The Work of Salvation even
as Conversion, is sometimes in Scripture
ascrib'd to God and sometimes to Men, to
signify that God is the Principle Cause,
and Men only subminstring Causes, whose
Pains are required to promote it. To begin
well in Religion, without Continuance,
will

† Heb. xii. Gal. vi. 9.

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will not do, it is only those, that persevere to the End that shall be sav'd: such who begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh; such who have known the Way of Righteousness, and turn from the Holy Commandments,----to their former Pollutions, like a Dog to his Vomit; the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning; it had been better for them, not to have known the Way of Righteousness. * The Backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own Ways. If any Man draw back, he draws back to Perdition. My Soul (saith the Almighty) shall have no Pleasure in him. † Time Believers have a flush of Affection for a while, like a Land Flood in Summer, they seem to run well for a Time, and set out fair for Heaven, as Lot's Wife out of Sodom for the Mountains, but by and by they are hindred, by and by they are offended at strict Religion, grow weary in well-doing, and tack about to find a broader and easier Way, they can't bear the Thoughts of constant Labour, irquent Sorrow for Sin, of running,

* 1 Pet. ii. † Hebi. x. 38, 39.

ing, wrestling and fighting till they die! *Will the Hypocrite, (says Job) always call upon God? † Hence the Almighty complains of the wicked Israelites, in the following affectionate Strains; O Ephraim! what shall I do unto thee? O Judah! what shall I do unto thee? For your Goodness is as a Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew it goeth away. As our Lord observes, No Man having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God. O the Injury, that Backsliders and Apostates do to the Honour and Interests of Religion! Wo to the World, because of Offences! that come thro' their Means, and so they exceedingly grieve the Spirit of God, and are in danger of committing the unpardonable Sin!*

But the Time requires that I shou'd proceed to some Improvement from what has been spoken. And

First. From hence we may learn, the *Falsehood and Danger of the Popish Doctrine of a Merit in Works* on the one Hand, as well

† Job. xxvii. 10.

well as of the *Antinomian Doctrine* on the other, which casts *contempt* upon good *Works*, and represents *Obedience* to the *Law* as unnecessary.

Both these *Doctrines* are equally unreasonable in themselves, *dishonourable* to God, and *detrimental* to us. Those who being ignorant of the *Righteousness* of God, and go about to establish their own, rebel against the *Government* and *Righteousness* of Christ, and rob him of his mediatorial *Crown* and *Dignity*. Such who seek after *Righteousness*, as it were by the *Works* of the *Law*, shall not attain it: i. e. Such who think to deserve Good at the Hand of God by their *Works*, or (while unconverted) thereby to ascertain their *Salvation* in regard of the *Promise* of God, they build the *Fabrick* of *Happiness* upon their own *Righteousness*, and so turn their *Backs* on Christ and trample upon his *Merit*, without which there is no *Salvation*!

And those likewise do as great *Dishonour* to God, who run into the contrary *Extreme*, and imagine that God by his *Gospel* and *Grace*, has freed us from *Obligations*

gations to obey his Law as a Rule of Practice. This is to turn the Grace of God into Wantonness, and make the Gospel a *Pillow to Sloth and Laziness, a Mystery of Iniquity, Rebellion and Mischief, unworthy to be receiv'd by any reasonable Creature!* Those who do not seek, are never like to find; those that strive not, shall not enter into the strait Gate; those who work not, are not like to obtain the Reward; those who run not, cannot with reason expect the Rest prepar'd for the People of God; *The Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence, and it is the Violent, (and none but they,) that take it by Force. Know ye not, that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Be not deceiv'd, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall Inherit the Kingdom of God.*

The proud *Pharisee* that depends on his Works, and the *lazy Libertine*, that neglects them, are like to dwell together in the same Hell; *Those that compass themselves about*

about with Sparks of their own kindling, and walk in the Light thereof, shall lie down in sorrow. The Pharisee that boasted of his Performances, and said he was not as other Men, but fasted, gave Alms, &c. went away unjustified, and the unprofitable Servant that hid his Talent in a Napkin, was cast into utter Darkness.

Truth and Duty lie in the middle between these two Extremes. O therefore! let us be careful, lest while we labour to avoid the one, we run into the other. But

Secondly. I may take occasion, my Brethren, from what has been said, to enquire of you, what is your Case and Curie? Are you at *Work* about your *Salvation*, or are you *idle*? Are you *asking* who shall shew you any (temporal) good? Or are ye enquiring the *Way to Zion*, with your *Faces* thitherward, *weeping* as ye go? O! is this your anxious Enquiry, *Men and Brethren*, what shall we do to be saved? I would to God that this were the Case of all of you that are unconverted. O it will never do till it comes to this!

If you are at work, let me ask you again, what are your *Works*? And *how* do ye *Work*? Have your *Works* the Properties of a good *Work*, before mention'd and explain'd? Do they proceed from a right Principle? Are they directed to a right *End*, regulated by a right *Rule*, and perform'd in a right *Manner*? Do ye work with a View to Salvation? *earnestly, incessantly* and *humbly*, with *fear* and *trembling*, being sensible of your *Unworthiness* of Mercy!

If your *Works* have the aforesaid Ingredients, give to God the *Glory* of his *Grace* vouchsafed upon you; for *who* has made you to differ from others, and what have ye that ye have not received? And why should you therefore glory as though you had not receiv'd it. In the mean time, take the *Comfort* of the *Grace* conferr'd, which is the *Seed* of *Glory*. There is a certain *Connection*, my Brethren, between such good *Works*, as have been now mentioned, and *eternal Blessedness*; For God is not unjust to forget your *Work* and *Labour* of *Love*. Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye *steadfast*,

fast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, for as much as ye know, that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord. But Perseverance is not to be expected without your Concurrence and Diligence.

And therefore evidence the Reality of your Grace by your Lives; *Bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, that you have Abraham to your Father, for unless you do the Works of Abraham, you are not his Children, (in a saving Sense.)*

Don't imagine, my Brethren, that your *Work* is over when you are converted, and that you have then nothing to do, but to sport and play, like the *Leviathan* in the Waters, or to sing like the indolent *Grasshopper* upon the Land, who spends the summer Season in careless, fruitless Singing one Kind of Song, till it meets unprepar'd, the Winter cold; go to the *Ant* thou *Sluggard*, consider her Ways and be wise; which having no Guide, Overseer or Ruler, provideth her Meat in the Summer, and gathereth her Food in the Harvest.

Sirs, your *Salvation Work* is but *just begun* when ye are *converted*; then and not till then ye have a *Capacity* to perform spiritual and acceptable Service, which was given you to be improv'd and increas'd by Diligence to the Praise of its Author, your own Comfort and Salvation.

You have *much to do* for God, your *Neighbour*, and your *own Souls*: *The Commandments of God are exceeding broad*. The Duties required of us, tho' they be all reasonable, are many, and difficult to be perform'd.

The *Time* you have to do this Work in, is *short and uncertain*, and much of it (as to some of you) already spent; and but little, it may be fear'd, is done, at least compar'd with what is due from us and with the Attainments of others. Alas! For our *Leanness* and low *Stature* in Religion, how little have we done for the good God? (who has done so much for us) And how much against him? O let this excite our Sorrows, and incline us to abound in Religious Labours! Awake my Brethren, awake to your Work, and move
not

not like *Snails** in the Christian Course, but imitate the flame winged Diligence of the *Seraphims* in God's Service; and so run that ye may obtain, for your Salvation is nearer than when ye believ'd.

O! be intreated to work the Works of God while it is Day, for the Night cometh when no Man can work. The Night of Death hastens fast towards us, and threatens to cover us with its sable Shades, to put a final Period to our Labours here, and hide us in the Retreats of Darknes and Oblivion! And dear Brethren, to what purpose has the Blessed God kindled the Torch of Conscience within us, and set the Sun of Truth in the Hemisphere of the Church above us, but to light us to our Labours? And shall we waste our Master's Candles and not do his Work? God forbid! O, while ye have the Light walk in it, and work by it, lest God in just Judgment gives you up to strong Delusions to believe Lies: Or chastise your Iniquities with
other

* A Snail was not offer'd to God in Sacrifice under the Jewish OEconomy, because, saith *Belarmine*, it was *animal tardigradum*, a sluggish, or slow pac'd animal.

other Rods which may break your Bones and make your Lives miserable! In a Course of Negligence you are in danger of being made *Major-misabibs*, a Terror to your selves and all about you; or a scandal and reproach to your present Profession, by falling into damnable *Heresies* in *Principle*, or enormous *Evils* in *Practice*!

Tho' your Work be great, my Brethren, yet your *Support* therein is great also, your *Success* sure, and the *Crown* before you *immortal* and *glorious*!

It is true, of our selves we are very *Weak*, and not able to *think*, much less to *Will* or do Good: But in CHRIST we are *Strong*, thro' him we can do all Things; and he it is that works in us both to will and to do of his own Good Pleasure: And indeed when we are *Weak*, then are we *Strong*, i. e. when we are most sensible of our own Weakness, then do we receive most Strength from him.

Nor do we run as uncertain of the *Issue*, our Perseverance is secur'd by the Mediator's perfect *Satisfaction*, by his perpetual

tual and prevalent *Intercession*, as well as by the *Purpose*, the *Promise*, the *Power*, and *Covenant* of God : His Purpose is invariable ; his Promise faithful ; his Power Almighty, and his Covenant eternal. In Respect of the Duration of its Benefits, which are therefore call'd *sure Mercies*, our *Life* is related to and wrap'd up in the *Life* of *Christ* ; the Members of whose Body we are. So that as long as the Head lives, the Members cannot dye (spiritually) : And hence is that precious saying of our dearest LORD to his Disciples ; *Because I live, ye shall live also ; while the ungodly walk in a vain shew, and vex themselves in vain ; while they Labour in the Fire, and weary themselves for very Vanity.* While they are cross'd with a Succession of Disappointments, and grasp after a *Dream*, a *Shadow*, which often flies from their Embraces ; and if obtain'd disappoints their Hopes, and does but *whet* instead of satisfying their Desires ! We seek a solid and satisfactory Good which we are sure, thro' Grace, of obtaining in the Way of Means : *Being confident of this very Thing,*

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that

that he which hath begun a Good Work in you, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ. And, dear Brethren, the Good we seek when obtain'd, will more than ballance all our Labours and Sufferings in quest of it: It is *Spiritual, Sublime, Immense, Noble, Eternal*; as it will suit the *Nature* of our Souls, so it will exceed their *Expectations*, and equal their *Duration* and *Desires*!

But it may be, some here present rest satisfied with *Works* which are Good only as to the *Matter* of them, without attending to or being concern'd about the *Manner* of Performance. To such I shall only say, that some of the *Pharisees* were, as to the *Letter* of the *Law*, blameless; in Regard of outward Conformity, and yet our Lord assures us, *That except our Righteousness exceeds theirs, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

And some others it's probable, are going on in a Course of *Works* that are *materially Evil*, in a Course of open *Impiety* and *Prophaneness*: *Sirs, the Master you serve is a Tyrant, his Work is Slavery and his Wages Death!*

The Way of Transgressors is hard, they travel with Iniquity, and draw Sin (as it were) with Cart Ropes: i. e. Their Evil Courses cost them much Labour and Solitude. It's hard to extinguish all the Remains of Reason and of Conscience, and entirely to banish all Fear of a future Judgment, Starts of Thought concerning the Evil Day, will crowd into your reluctant Minds, notwithstanding of all your preventive Measures, and mix Wormwood and Gaul with your brutish Delights.

And likewise as your *Master Satan* is an *Usurper*, and has no Right to your Service, so he is rigorous and inconsistent in his Demands, and is never satisfied with the Homage of his *Vassals*!

But that which completes the doleful *Scene*, is the Terribleness of the *Reward* for which you *Work*, while ye persist in Sin and Impenitence: It is a Reward, my Friends, of Darkness, of Death, of *Misery* and *Ruin*!

The *Wrath* of the avenging God will be adequate to all the Circumstances of your *Crimson Guilt*, in wounding your selves,

and slighting the Remedy provided by indulgent Heaven, and in pouring Contempt upon the great Salvation set before you by the Gospel, and purchas'd by no less a Price than the BLOOD OF GOD? O dreadful Portion! O unsupportable, unavoidable, and eternal Vengeance! How awful art thou? Sinners what Mind can conceive, or Tongue express your doleful Doom? Believe it Sirs, *it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living GOD! Who hath measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and meted out the Heavens with a Span; who hath comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance. Before whom the Pillars of the Earth tremble, and are astonished at his Reproof: Before whom all Nations are as nothing, and counted less than Nothing and Vanity: His Head and Hairs are white like Wool and Snow; and his Eyes are as a Flame of Fire; and his Feet are like unto fine Brass, as if they burn'd in a Furnace; and his Voice as the Sound of many Waters. He has in his*

Right

Right Hand seven Stars, and out of his Mouth goes a sharp two-edged Sword; and his Countenance is as the Sun shining in his Strength. O Sinners! how will ye be able to bear up under the Terrors of the final Advent of this great God from Heaven to Earth? When all Nature shall be in the utmost Agony, behold he cometh with the Clouds, and every Eye shall see him, and they also which pierc'd him, and all the Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him! O how will you be able to behold him descending to the Judgment Seat, in all the Pomp of Heaven, with shining Millions round about him, in their most gorgeous Robes of Beauty and Light, while the Earth TREMBLES, the Heavens THUNDER and BURN, and the Ocean ROARS! How will ye be able to behold him on his awful Throne, which shall be like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire, a fiery Stream shall issue from before him, Thousands of Thousands shall minister unto him, and ten Thousand times ten Thousand shall stand before him, while the Judgment is set and the Books are opened. O the woful Plight of the

Impenitent

Impenitent in that Day! Poor bereav'd Creatures! They shall have none in Heaven or Earth to help them. How will you cry to the Mountains to cover you from the Face of the Lamb that sits upon the Throne? How will you tremble before the dreadful Bar of the GREAT GOD when you hear your condemnatory Sentence denounc'd by the Mouth of CHRIST? Go ye accursed into everlasting Burnings prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.

O the Horrors of being for ever separated from the blessed God, and all the Sweets of Paradise! And sunk in the gloomy Vault of Fire, Horror, Despair, Revenge and Grief! Under the Weight of the Wrath of Omnipotence, the Upbraidings of your own guilty Minds, the Reproaches of Infidels and Insults of Devils. Poor Sinners! your Labour and your Sorrow might now be of Service to your Souls; but then the Time, the Time of Mercy is expir'd and gone, and never to be recall'd! Then your passionate Bewailings of the Loss of Time, of Talents and Salvation, will be to no purpose, all in vain and too late!

O the *Self-revenge* that will then tear your wretched Souls! For your present Madness and your Guilt; *In Hell* (says our dearest Lord) *will be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

And is this the *Reward* ye labour so hard for? Yes surely! 'Tho' you have it not in view, it is the certain Consequence of your impenitent Impieties, *He that sows to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And are ye poor Sinners, fond of your own Destruction? Why hasten ye so fast to Ruin? Why labour ye so hard for Death and Hell?

But others it is probable are *slothful* and *indolent*, and neglect religious *Labour* altogether; such I wou'd accost in the following Language: *Why stand ye all the Day idle?*

Is there not a vast *Eternity* before you, to which you are fast hastning, and from which there is no returning?

Have ye not precious and immortal Souls within you, which are of a noble *Original*, spiritual *Nature* and perpetual *Dura-*

Duration? And must be in a little Time perfectly *Happy* or inexpressibly *Miserable* there! And that unalterably, according to your State and Conduct in this Life, in which you are Candidates for Eternity! Is not the glorious God a blessed *Master*? Who in regard of his incommunicable and essential Excellency, deserves your Service, and in regard of his Communications of being and Good to you, has a right to it in Point of Justice and Gratitude; *Shall a Man plant a Vineyard, and not eat of the Fruit of the Vineyard? (Shall he milk a Flock, and not drink of the Milk of the Flock?* Add to this, that *Jehovah* is *All-sufficiency*, to make you happy in his Service, and to this his Goodness inclines him.

And is not the Work to which he calls you, *possible, necessary* and *noble*?

Tho' ye cannot change your Hearts, or perform spiritual and acceptable Service by your own Strength, and that partly because ye want a spiritual *Principle*, yet the Almighty has graciously propos'd to confer this, and to give together with it, his Assistance and Influence, to such as wait upon him in
the

the Way of Duty : I say, there is a *probability* of obtaining these Mercies in this Way, while the *Impotent* wait at the *Pool* of Duty, for the *Moving of the Waters*, and try to stretch out their withered Arms. The gracious God is wont in a sovereign Way, at Times to move the Waters, and give Healing and Strength.

And if a *Probability* of Success, is the only Spring of all that Labour and Industry about temporal Things which fills this lower Globe, why should it be thought too small an Incentive to religious Diligence ? Seeing that the *Business* of Religion we are not equal to, and the *Benefits* of it we cannot deserve !

It is absolutely necessary, my Brethren, to labour for the Salvation of your Souls ; *What shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul*, (said our dearest Lord) *if he should gain the World, and loose the same ?* May I not then address you Sirs ! in the Language of our Redeemer to *Martha* ; *Martha, Martha, thou art careful about many Things, but one Thing is needful : NEEDFUL* above them all, and what is

that, but to *serve* God sincerely, in order to secure the Salvation of your Souls? *This, this, is the better Part, which shall not be taken away. Wherefore then do ye spend your Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which satisfieth not? Incline your Ear to God, and comply with his gracious Injunction in our Text, that your Souls may live. Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.*

Nor has the Work to which you are call'd, any thing *mean* and *sordid* in it, but is entirely *rational, sublime* and *noble*; this tends to exalt the degenerate Nature of Man to the Pitch of its primitive Dignity and Beauty, by conforming it to the blessed God. This advances that *Reason* which is an Emblem of the *divine Intelligence*, and by which Man is distinguish'd from the Beasts that perish, to its just Prehe- minence above, and Empire over the Wilds and Mutines of brutal Sense and Passion!

And dear Friends! is not the Reward
great,

great, which by divine Order follows your being enabled to perform the *Work* of *Obedience*, in the Manner before express'd. And hence it is call'd, *an eternal Weight of Glory*, and compar'd to a *Crown*, and *Kingdom*; and the Place where it is enjoin'd, is set forth in the sacred Volumn, by all the rarest Beauties and richest Objects of this lower World; the *Streets are of Gold*, the *Walls of Jasper*, and the *Gates compos'd of various Jewels*; there is the *River of Life*, and the *Tree of God*, whose *Fruits are refreshing* and ravishing, and whole *Leaves heal the Nations*. There the sable *Shades of Night*, can have no access, but perpetual *Day* triumphs in its bright *Meridian*, without the least *Vicissitude* of *Clouds*, *Darkness* or *Eclipse*!

There the redeem'd enjoy a perpetual *Rest* from every *Evil* and *Misery*, which in this *Life* they either feel or fear, and possess a *Good* worthy of their exalted *Natures*, and equal to their *Desires* and *Hopes*, the Issue of which, is a *Joy* superior to that of the *Harvest* and of *Victory*, which never terminates!

And have ye not, my Brethren, been call'd to this *Work*, by divers of God's faithful *Servants* at different Seasons, with compassion and importunity? And the *Re-compense of Reward* set before you, to which you should have an Eye in your religious Labours! *Why then do ye stand all the Day idle?*

How vast is the Disparity between the different *Masters, Works and Wages*, which now court your Choice? *God and the Devil, Holiness and Sin, Heaven and Hell!*

Is there any Comparison between a rightful and indulgent *Sovereign*, who is the Fountain of Being, of Beauty and Perfection, who possesses every Thing that is great and good, that is valuable and venerable, and a *Rebel, Usurper and Tyrant*, who is cover'd with Baseness and Deformity, and breathes *Cruelty and Blood?*

Is there any comparison between Conformity to the purest *Excellency*, and following the Conduct of *brutal Appetites*, or *Satan's Dictates?*

Are ye at any Loss, my Brethren, to determine in so plain a Case, whether ye
will

will chuse GOD or the *Devil*, *Liberty* or *Slavery*, *Life* or *Death*? O amazing Stupidity! *Why halt ye between two Opinions?*

God be God, serve him, but if Baal then follow him.

You know, Sirs, that the Work which ye have to do is *difficult*, the *Space* you have to do it in *contracted* and *transient*; you know not, what a *Day* may bring forth; your *Life* is but a *Vapour*, which appears for a little *Time*, and then *vanishes* away. And yet on this *Breath* that plays up and down your *Nostrils*, on this slender *Thread*, hangs the *Weight* of your eternal *Weal* or *Woe*. O if this *Buble* breaks, this *brickle Thread* is cut, while you are negligent of your *Salvation-Work*, you are ruin'd for ever! And dear Sirs! What innumerable *Accidents* is it liable to? O! how can ye keep from trembling, when ye think of pale *Death*, and the *Consequences* of it to you, in your present *Condition*? Sirs! Sirs! ye may be arrested by it in a few *Moments*, and put beyond *Hope* of *Recovery*, if ye do not awake to your *Work*! O how dread-

dreadful is it, to be in the Iron Arms of Death, in a graceless, christless State!

The beauteous *Morning* of *Life* has expir'd with some of you, which is a Season best adapted to the Labours of Religion, and has expir'd in vain; and with others it is past *mid-Day*; and some draw near a *setting Sun*: And yet are (spiritually) Idle, and have not struck one right Stroak towards their SALVATION; but are sleeping securely under the pregnant *Vengeance* of *Heaven*, amidst the *Dangers* of *Death*, amidst the awful *Thunders* of *Sinai*, and gentler *Charms* of *Gerezim*; they'l neither be alarm'd nor alur'd to their WORK. O the Infatuation of Mankind! wonder ye Heavens, and be astonish'd O Earth at this!

My Friends, it is no small MERCY that ye are under a *Command* to labour for SALVATION, and that there is any Encouragement given by GOD of obtaining it in this Way.

To be WITHOUT LAW and COMMANDS, is the unhappy PRIVILEGE of the DEVILS and DAMNED SPIRITS, inasmuch as GOD intends no MERCY for them

them he neither requires or receives any DUTY of them!

O if the Almighty did send a Message of Mercy to those forlorn Spirits, intimating that in the Way of OBEDIENCE, or *working* for their SALVATION, there was not only a *Possibility* but a *Probability* of obtaining LIFE and BLESS; there would be a joyful JUBILIE among the DAMN-ED! All Hell wou'd rejoyce, and every Inhabitant of that dark abode, wou'd with gladness shake the massy *Sbackles* with which it is bound! Yea it is probable, they would stoop to the severest Service to obtain that Happiness which they feel so much the Want of, and which you now so basely flight!

Do you grumble at the Strictness of the Law, and want to be freed from it as a Rule of Duty? a *Rule* which all the *Choirs* above, both of *Saints* and *Seraphims* with *Delight* obey, and shall be under (in respect of all its Stroaks that respect pure unembodied Spirits) to all Eternity. And do you count that a PRIVILEGE to be delivered

delivered from the HAPPINESS of HEAVEN, O strange!

Well if it will be any Comfort to you, I must inform you, that you may have this *Lust* gratify'd in *Hell*: There the damned are freed from this dreadful LAW which you count so heavy a YOKE: There the Almighty requires no more DUTY, no LOVE, no OBEDIENCE, no REPENTANCE: If you count this a *Privilege* I shall not envy your *Happiness*, but pity your *Infatuation*! and pray to be deliver'd from your lawless Comfort, and kept eternally under the *Law* to God!

See Brethren, the *Pains* and *Labours* many take to amass the momentary *Trifles* of Time, which are unsatisfactory in their Nature, and of short and uncertain *Duration*; they rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the *Bread of Care and Sorrow*; and all to secure what has *no abiding*; what cannot help them in their greatest *Extremities*; such as distress of Conscience, the Approach of Death and Judgment. And will you not take as much pains to secure your

The Improvement.

your Salvation as many do, to load
with thick Clay.

See the pains that many take to damn
their Souls by the most *effronted* Impieties!
They belch out blasphemies against the blef-
fed God, and implore his Vengeance on
them! They rush upon the *Besses* of his
Bucklers! O the Madness of Sinners! Who
wou'd think that Men cou'd so far dege-
nerate, as to out-do the very Devils in *Im-
pudence*! O Sirs! will ye not be entreated,
to take as much *pains* to obtain *Salvation*,
as those abandon'd Wretches take to damn
their Souls, seeing that if ye do it, it's like-
ly you'll succeed. See the *Pains* the dear
Redeemer took to *purchase* *Salvation*! Be-
hold the *Labours* and *Sufferings* of his
Life! Behold the *Sorrows* of his *Soul*,
which caus'd a bloody Sweat in the Gar-
den, and an out-cry on the Cross, *Eloi,
Eloi, lama Sabacthani*!— And can you
see a *Saviour* unweariedly *Labouring*, yea
sweating *Blood* to purchase your *Salvation*,
and be utterly unconcern'd and indolent
about your own? O strange *Stupidity*!
O horrid *Madness*! O *Rock*! O *Ada-
mant*!

mant! See the Pains that Satan takes to prevent your *Salvation*. Look how the *Proteus* changes Shapes to compass his Design! Sometimes he appears like an *Angel of Light*, and sometimes he roars and rages like a *Lyon rampant*, seeking whom he may devour. O how subtle is he in his *Stratagems*, and unwearied in his *Applications*! And will ye not take as much pains for the *Salvation* of your *Souls*, as Satan does to damn them?

See the *Pains* that the faithful *Servants of Christ* take, to countermine the Enemy and his *Emissaries*! To baffle their bloody *Intrigues*, and to rescue your *Souls* out of their bewitching *Wiles*, as a *Bird out of the Share of the Fowler*. They address you with *Bowels* and *Sollicitude*, and wou'd rejoyce to hear of your *serious Inquiries* after *Salvation*. Your accepting their *Message*, wou'd be the greatest *Kindness* you can express to them. Why will you blast their *Labours* and break theirs *Heart* by your *Obstinacy*? Shou'd not you in reason be more concern'd for your own *Salvation* than they? *Now then* we are *Ambassadors for Christ,*

Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead ye be reconciled to God. See the Gladness that spreads thro' all the Courts above, on occasion of the Conversion of a Soul; the Father, Son and Spirit rejoice! the joyful Cherubs clap their Wings and shout the Honours of victorious Grace; and all the shining Ranks of Saints and Seraphims, joyn in harmonious Hosannas to God and to the Lamb that sits upon the Throne, and every of them strikes his golden Harp.---

Again Brethren, consider that the Soul of Man is a restless, active Being, that it will be painful in its chase of something, and cannot be at rest, so that it is but turning its Motions into a religious Channel, and then its like to have a happy Issue!

And now, Sirs, will ye, can ye, dare ye be idle after all?---Well, I must leave the Matter to God, and appeal to him, that I am clear of your Blood, if you persist in your Indolence!

But perhaps, some poor Sinners Heart thaws by this Time, and asks with seriousness, what shall I do to be saved?

Besides what has been already said in answer to this Question, I would add at present these few Words: *Labour orderly*, begin at the right End of your Work, and try to lay the *Foundation* first: *Examine* your *State* towards God impartially, by his Word, and when you come to know that it is bad, *think* often on the *Badness* and *Miseries* of it, and pray for a Sense of them, as well as of your utter inability to deliver your selves from them; *Repent of your Sins* and *believe in the Lord Jesus*; and O beware of *quençhing* the convincing Operations of his *Hely Spirit*!

But I must turn me to the *Saints* of God, and offer a Word of *Council* and *Excitement* to them, and then conclude. My very dear Brethren! Be not lifted up with *Enlargements*, nor cast down when ye want them; *Consolation* is no Part of our *Sanctification*, you may travel when its *Cloudy*, as well as when the *Sun shines* out. Be *kumbled* for your Imperfections, but not *discourag'd* by them, for ye are compleat in *Christ*, and your *Right to Happiness* is founded alone upon his *Blood* and *Obedience*,

ence, by all means encourage your *Faith* in the *Promises*, lean on *Jesus* as a *Prophet*, for *Direction* respecting the *Matter* of your *Labours*, lean on him as a *King* to help you in the *Manner* of them, and lean on him as a *Priest* for the *Acceptance* of them all.

Dear Brethren! Be excited to *persevering Diligence*, for it is as *reasonable* and *amiable* now, as when ye at first believ'd. O beware of forgetting your *first Love*, and *falling from your first Works*; and if any have been guilty of this, remember *from whence thou art fallen*, and *repent*, and do the *first Works*, lest a *displeased Jesus* come unto you quickly, and *remove your Candlestick out of his Place*, except ye *repent*.

Think on the noble *Examples* of heroick *Faith*, unbroken *Patience*, and unfainting *Diligence* that shone with peculiar *Glory* and *Lustre*, in the Lives of many of God's *Army* that have gone before you to *Glory*, who were under no stronger *Engagements* and had no greater *Encouragements* thereto than you, nay divers of them in some respects not so much, because of the *brighter Dispensation* you enjoy. O then, let us
work

work out our Salvation with fear and trembling! Let us follow those, who by Faith and Patience inherited the Promises. I shall conclude this Discourse with the Advice of the Apostle Paul to the believing Hebrews, which runs thus; Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our Faith. Who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down on the right Hand of the Throne of God.

S E R M O N II.

PHILIP. ii. 12, 13.

Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.

MY Brethren! The three principal Things in the Christian Religion, are Knowledge, Faith and Practice, without which it cannot subsist.

The Object of Religion, the blessed God, is to be known and believ'd in as the first Truth, lov'd as the chief Good, and obey'd as the supreme Lord.

The Subject of Religion, Man, must have his Mind enlightned with the Knowledge of Truth, his Will adorn'd with the Belief of it, and Love of Good, as well as his Life beautified with practical Holiness, or good Works.

The very *Essence* of Religion requires or includes *Knowledge* and *Worship*, and therefore it is frequently represented in Scripture under the Character of *Doctrines* and *Truth*, and eternal Life is ascrib'd to it.

And the *End* of Religion, namely *Happiness*, includes the *Knowledge* of God, *Faith* in him, and *Conformity* to him, or *Obedience*. In Heaven the Saints will see *Jehovah as he is, and be like him*; there *Knowledge, Faith* and *Obedience* will be *perfect*.

The sacred Scriptures propose to us *Doctrines* to be known, *Promises* and *Threatnings* to be believ'd, and *Precepts* to be obey'd; and indeed the one prepares the Way for the other.

Without *Knowledge, Faith* is *enthusiastical Rashness* and *Delusion*, and without *Faith, Knowledge* is but *barren Speculation*; without *Knowledge, Practice* is *blind Superstition*, and without *Faith, formal Devotion*!

It is the last of the Three that I am to discourse upon at present, namely, *Practice*,

or

of *Good Works*, which are indeed the *Fruit and Design* of the former.

In the preceeding *Sermon*, after an *Introduction*, I observ'd, that there be three Things contain'd in the *Text*, *viz.*

I. *A Duty enjoyn'd.*----

II. *The Manner of performing it pre-scrib'd.* And

III. *Arguments exciting thereto mentioned.*

These Things I propos'd to *insist upon* in their *Order*, by *Way of Explication*, and then to proceed to the *Improvement*.

The *first General Head* of this Method I then spoke upon, and labour'd to open the *Properties of Good Works*, as well as to *unbinge the Popish Doctrine of Merit* upon the one hand, and to *establish the Necessity of good Works* on the other, against the *Antinomians*. I likewise spoke a little upon the

Second General Head, Which was to shew, *how the Duties of Obedience, or Good Works, shou'd be perform'd.* In speaking upon which, I mentioned two Particulars, namely, that they shou'd be perform'd, *pain-*

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fully and perseveringly. I therefore pro-
ceed now to observe,

III. That we must work *with fear and trembling*, by which we are not to understand, a *slavish Fear*, or *distrust of God*, For this is very prejudicial to our Progress in Piety, it provokes our God, dejects our Minds, and mars our Councils and Performances. It is doubtless, therefore, more generally, a *filial* or *child-like Fear*, that is here recommended to the People of God: And particularly, (1st) It is a *Fear of Reverence* respecting *God's Majesty*, Wherefore we receiving a *Kingdom which cannot be moved*, let us have *Grace*, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with *Reverence and godly Fear*, **FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.** A holy *Awe* of the *Greatness, Justice and Glory* of God, should ever possess our Minds. (2^{dly}) In relation to *our selves*, it is a *Fear of Modesty, Humility, Self-suspicion and Self-diffidence*; the same *humble Mind* should be in us, which was also in *Christ Jesus*: The Apostle Paul was among the *Corinthians in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.*

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 ling. * Let us therefore fear, lest a Promise being left us of entering into his Rest, any of you shou'd seem to come short of it. † Be not high Minded but fear. ‡ (3dly) In Relation to the Dangers with which we are environ'd, it is a Fear of Sollicitude; and hence Paul informs us, that he kept his Body under, lest having preach'd to others, he himself shou'd become a cast-away. We should in Dangers distrust ourselves, and with anxious Care and eager haste, fly to Jesus, as the only hiding Place from the Wind, and covert from the Tempest, firmly trusting in him, and closely cleaving to him, as the Child in the Mother's Arms on the top of a Precipice; so much the more as it fears a Fall, will, with the greater eagerness and sollicitude, embrace and cleave to its Parent for Protection from the imminent Danger. (4thly) In respect of Temptations, it is a Fear of Caution, disposing us to avoid the Appearances of Evil; and to pray that we be not led into Temptation. The gracious Soul fearing to offend his

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Father,

* 1 Cor. ii. 3. † Heb. iv 1. ‡ Rom. xi. 20.

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Father, and knowing his own Weakness, to withstand Temptations to Error in Principle or Practice, does therefore in his general Course endeavour with care to avoid them: The burnt Child dreads the Fire, but Hypocrites not having sincere Love to Truth or Holiness, and presuming upon their own Strength, are prophanely bold, to the Reproach of God's Name, and their own Dishonour and Prejudice. If we shou'd be *jealous* over others, (with blessed *Paul*) and fear least by any Means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtilty, so their Minds should be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Christ; we should have a godly *jealousy* over our selves much more, for Charity begins at Home, tho' it shou'd not end there. *

The *Fear* of God is certainly the Character of a truly religious Person; and hence *Job* is describ'd, to be one that *feared God, and eschewed Evil*. † Indeed it is the Foundation of all Religion.

Now a gracious Person does not only
fear

* 2 Cor. xi. 23 † Job 1

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 fear the Goodness of God, † least he shou'd
 displease and loose it by unworthy Behavi-
 our; and hence we are bid to, *keep our
 selves in the Love of God*; and indeed the
 Use of Means to this End is very con-
 sistent with God's Promises. * 'Fear
 ' (saith *Augustine*) is the Flight of the Soul
 ' least it shou'd loose what it loves.' ‡ The
 dutiful Child fears to offend its Parents, and
 the chaste *Wife* fears to displease her
 Husband.

I say, the gracious Person does not only
 fear God's Goodness, but his *Justice*; the
Threatnings of the divine Word, should,
 and do influence his *Fear*.

The infinitely wise God has implanted
 no *Power* or *Passion* in the human Soul *in
 vain*, they all serve when regulated in their
 Motions and Tendencies, one uniform,
 noble Design, worthy of their *Author* and
original Situation.

And this is indeed the grand Design of
 the Christian Religion, which is admirably
 adapted

† Hof. iii. 5. * Ezek. xxxvi. ; 7. ‡ *Fuga anime ne
 perdat quod Diligit.*

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adapted to affect every of them; this by its *Precepts* fires our *Love*; by its *Doctrines*, *Narratives* and *Proposals*, it strikes our *Admiration* and *Ingeniuty*, our *Gratitude* and *Grief*. By its *Threatnings* it alarms our *Fear*, and by its *Promises* allures our *Hope*, those cardinal Springs of Action!

Jehovah never devis'd a Religion, to destroy any Power or Passion he himself had form'd, but only to direct them to proper Objects, and regulate their Degrees of Motion; which being observ'd, they conspire in harmony to promote God's Glory, and the Creature's Honour, Comfort and Benefit in his Service.

Every *Affection* shou'd therefore be exercis'd upon its proper Object, as the *Love* of God is the *incentive* of our *Love*, so is his *Justice* (together with the Threatnings of his Word which are the Declarations thereof) the *Object* of our *Fear*. By these (in part) the Spirit of God as a Spirit of Bondage to fear, brings the Soul to a Closure with Christ at first, and by these Threatnings it is afterwards influenc'd (in part) to walk in the Way to Blessedness.

There

There is a *Fear of God's Judgments*, which hath not only *God's Spirit* for its *Author* but *Concomitant*; and hence he is call'd a *Spirit of Fear*. * This Method the Holy Spirit uses with us, while we sojourn in these clay Tabernacles, to influence us to Obedience.

Otherwise to what purpose are the *Threatnings* propounded to Believers so frequently in the Holy Scriptures? Unless it be to excite their *Fear*? Surely *Paul* understood the *Gospel* thoroughly, and yet he enjoyns Believers in our Text, *to work out the Work of their Salvation with fear and trembling*. And elsewhere he Exhorts them, *to serve God acceptably with Godly Fear*; and that because *God is a consuming Fire*. And did not our Lord urge his Disciples *to fear him, that after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell*. † The Psalmist expresses the solemn Sense he had of the Judgments of God in the following Manner; *My Flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments!* †
Altho'

* Rom. viii. 15. † Luke xii. 5. † Ps. cxix. 120.

3 20 *How good Works should be perform'd.*

Altho' the Command of God, be the ground or formal Reason of our *Obedience*, yet the *Fear* of him shou'd be a subordinate *Motive*.

And indeed there is a beautiful *Harmony* between the Grace of *Fear*, and *Faith*, *Love*, *Hope* and *Joy*.

Faith produces *Fear*, and *Fear* confirms *Faith*; By *Faith* Noah being warn'd of God, of things not seen as yet, mov'd with *fear*, prepar'd an *Ark*. * *All Men shall fear* (saith the Psalmist) *and trust in him*. † *Faith* by giving the Soul a View of God's *Justice* and *Holiness*, produces a *Fear* of *Reverence*, and this disposes the Soul the more to believe the certainty of God's *Judgments*!

And *Love* without *Fear*, would become *secure* and *irreverent*, and *Fear* without *Love* would become *slavish* and *tormenting*! There is nothing more fearful than an ingenuous *Love*, and nothing more loving than a filial *Fear*.

There is also an admirable *Harmony* between

* Heb. xi. 7. † Psal. lxxv. 9.

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between *Fear* and *Hope*; without *Fear*,
Hope wou'd degenerate into *Presumption*,
and without *Hope*, *Fear* wou'd sink into
Desperation.

Nor is there any inconsistency between
Fear and *Joy*, for *Fear* qualifies *Joy*, and
makes it *reverent*, and becoming a depen-
dent Being; and *Joy* sweetens *Fear* and
makes it pleasing and delightful. And
hence we are bid to *rejoice with trembling*.

* And the Man is pronounced *blessed, that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments*. † I proceed now to the

III *General Head of Discourse*, which
was to shew, *why we shou'd perform the Duties of Obedience required of us*. And

First: This is the Command of God;
Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation. † Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see

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* Psalm. ii. 11. † Ps. cxii. 1. † Heb. xii. 14.

322 *Why good Works should be perform'd.*
See the Lord. Put on Bowels of Mercy,
*Kindness, humblicitess of Mind. * They who*
have believ'd in God, should be careful to
maintain good Works. † God is our unalterable
and rightful Lord and Sovereign, to him
we, owe by the strongest Claims of Right,
Hoinage and Service, seeing it is from him
we have deriv'd our all, and on him we
have a continual Dependance ; his Will is
therefore our Law, to which we are oblig-
ed to conform, with the utmost Readiness
and profoundest Reverence ; and in this
Way only we can reasonably expect his
Acceptance. But when this is refus'd, a
rebellious unequal War is commenc'd a-
gainst Heaven.

Secondly : It is a Work of Salvation ;
Work out your own Salvation ; and therefore
its an honourable, pleasant and profitable
Work.

The Work of SALVATION is honoura-
ble, in respect of its Author, Nature and
Consequences.

The Author of this Work is honoura-
ble,

* Col. iii. 12. † Tit. iii. 8.

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ble, no other than the *glorious God*; he it is that has enjoyn'd it, and him we serve in the Performance of it. It's accounted an Honour to attend the Person of an earthly *Potentate*, but herein we attend the *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*, and that as seated on his gracious *Throne*, and have therein the noblest *Seraphs* for our *Companions*.

And indeed the *Nature* of this *Work* is *honourable*, tending to enoble our *reasonable Nature*, by *conforming* it to the *Divine*. Are not the pious *Dispositions* and *Actions* we are called to, the very same for Substance that the *Angels* are continually employ'd about? The *Nature* of the *Service* enjoyned upon us is *spiritual*, *pure* and *precious*. Besides the *Consequence* hereof is *honourable*; for thus we are not only the *Servants* but the *Friends* of *God*; *ye are my Friends*, said the blessed *Jesus* to his *Disciples*, *if you do whatsoever I command you*. *

And is any *Title* more *honourable* than this, to be the *Friend* of *God*? This was

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the

* *John xv. 14.*

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the Honour to which the blessed *Abraham*
was advanc'd, and with which he was
adorn'd.

Again, my Brethren, the *Work* of *Sal-*
vation is a pleasant *Work*; *Wisdoms Ways*
are Ways of pleasantness, and all its Paths
are peace. The Psalmist speaking of the
Commands of God, declares, that they are
sweeter than Honey, and the Honeycomb.
And what can be intended by this, but
that they are lovely in themselves, and that
Obedience to them is delightful?

Now this Delight in Obedience, springs
in part from the Suitableness thereof to the
New Nature that is in gracious Persons,
which gives a spiritual and general Byass
to all the *Powers of their Souls*; and there-
fore cannot but make (*holy*) Actions, which
are agreeable to that fix'd Principle, easy
and pleasant, especially when Grace is in
exercise. It is on this Account our Lord
assures us, *that his Yoke is easy, and his*
Burden is light. He does not make his
Yoke easy by lessening it, but by conforming
our Dispositions to it. And hence the A-
postle informs us that he *delighted in the*
Law

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Law of God, after the inner Man: i. e.
So far as he was renewed he loved it, and was naturally enclin'd to obey it, and therefore delighted therein. The *new Nature* is as prone to obey the *Law*, as a Fountain to send out its Streams; and therefore its compar'd to a *Well of Water, that Springs up to eternal Life*. But because our Sanctification is imperfect, therefore the *Flesh lusts against the Spirit*, and hinders us in Acts of Obedience, so that we cannot do the Things that we would. And thus our sacred Service is stain'd, our Peace broken at Times, and our Pleasure mar'd, *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

But the Delight in Obedience, likewise results from that Communion with God which is enjoyn'd therein; this gives rest to the weary Soul, and is as Marrow and Fatness to the Hungry, yea it is the very Life of Life. The blessed God meets in mercy those that work Righteousness, and gives them Communications of Light, of Love, of Peace, of Joy; and hence the Psalmist observes, that those have great Peace,

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Peace, that love God's Law.----- And that in keeping his Commandments there is a great Reward.----- This is our rejoycing, says the Apostle Paul, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, we have had our Converlation in the World.

And is not the *Work of Salvation profitable*, my Brethren? Yes surely! For *Godliness hath not only the Promise of this Life, but of that which is to come*. If we seek first the *Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteousness thereof, all other Things shall be added to us*, says our dear Redeemer: *i. e.* We shall have that Measure of the Things of Time, and that Degree of Comfort in them, which is most for God's Glory and our Benefit. And can we reasonably desire more? But our Reward of Mercy, is principally to be expected in a future World; there, there, our Salvation shall be compleat and perfect. Now there are three *Properties of that Salvation, in the Expectation of which we labour, that may justly incite our Diligence, viz!* it is *great, incomprehensible, eternal.*

It is a *great Salvation*, not only in respect

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pect of the *Price* which was laid down
to purchase it, the *Blood* of the *Son* of
God, but also in respect of the *Evils* we
are thereby *delivered from*, and the *Blessings*
we are *instated in*. There is a perfect *Free-*
dom from all *moral* and *penal Evil*, from
Sin and all the gloomy *Train* of *Miseries*
introduc'd by it, which affect our *Names*,
Bodies, *Estates* and our *Souls*. In *Heaven*
there is a perfect *Rest* prepar'd from them
all! There we shall be freed from every
Remain of *Evil*, and *all Tears shall be*
wip'd away.

And on the other Hand, how great are
the *Blessings* that are there possess'd? Such
as an *immediate Vision* of the *blessed God*, a
perfect Conformity to him, an *uninterrupted*
Communion with him, and *unceasing Joy* and
Praise thence issuing! Then the glorify'd
shall see *Jehovah as he is*, and be made like
to him in *Purity* and *Perfection*! O the
pleasing *Transports* that must result from
an *immediate View* of the unvail'd *Beauties*
of the *Deity*! The orient *Glories* of *IM-*
MANUEL, and all the open'd *Charms* of
his

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his Word, and Works of Creation, Redemp-
tion, and Providence.

Another *Property* of this *Salvation* is, that it is *incomprehensible*; *Eye hath not seen, neither has Ear heard, nor has it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Greatness of that Glory that is reserv'd for the People of God.*----*Beloved now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* The richest and strongest *Images* we can form, faint before the *Glories of Paradise!* Our *Minds* in their most exalted *Flights*, cannot project adequate *Ideas* of it, and our *Speech* is lost in *Obscurity* when we attempt the *Theme*.

In the mean time we may be permitted to say, that it is an *eternal! Salvation*, a *Happiness* that shall know no *Interruption* or *End*; and hence the *Place* where it is enjoy'd is call'd a *City*, that hath *Foundations*, whose *builder and maker is God*. It is perfectly freed from all the *Changes* and *Vicissitudes* to which the *Things of Time* are *Subject*.

Thirdly:

Thirdly: Another Argument us'd by the Apostle in our Text, to excite to Obedience, is the *Property* that *Believers* have in *Salvation*; Work out your own *Salvation*. *Property* is certainly the *Spring* of *Labour* and *Sollicitude* about the Things of *Time*, and shou'd it not be much more so about the Things of *Eternity*, which infinitely excel them in *Importance* and *Duration*? *If you are wise here, you are wise for your selves, but if foolish you alone must bear it.* It is your own *Salvation*, Brethren, which you are entreated to secure. And will ye not be concern'd about it, and labour for that *Meat* which will never perish?

Some that neglect others *Business*, are careful about their own, because of their *Property*. Well, here is an *Eternal* and most *important Property*, the *one Thing needful*, which exceeds in *Value* all the rest; and which unless it be secur'd, all is lost; *For what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul, if he shou'd gain the whole World and loose the same?*

And forasmuch as it is highly probable, that there are different *Degrees* of

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Glory, as well as of Misery, and that those who have made the greatest Advances in Holiness and Usefulness are made Partakers of the former. This is no inconsiderable Excitement to religious Diligence; *He that gain'd ten Talents, was made Ruler over ten Cities; and those that turn many unto Righteousness, are said to shine as the Stars for ever and ever, i. e. with distinguish'd Lustre.* But the

Fourth, and last Argument, which the Apostle useth in our Text, to excite the believing Philippians, and us thro' them, to work out the Work of ycur Salvation with fear and trembling, is this, that it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure. This Argument is adapted to work upon our Gratitude, our Fear and our Hope, as appears thus:

It is a great Instance of divine Goodness and Condescension, that he freely and without any desert of yours, works in you by his holy Spirit a Disposition and Capacity to do good; and therefore, *Ingenuity and Gratitude for so great a Benefit, should constrain*

strain

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strain you to comply with his blessed Operations.

It is a *holy* and *sovereign* God who, works in you of his own *good Pleasure*, who if ye do not comply with his Influences *humbly* and *speedily*, will be provok'd to withdraw them, and chastise your neglect; tho' he will not *take his loving Kindness away*, or *suffer his Faithfulness to fail*; yet he will *chastise your Iniquities with Rods*, and *your Transgressions with Stripes*. This Consideration may justly alarm your Fear.

It is a *gracious* God who works in you, both *to will and to do*: And this may Support your *Hope*; tho' you are not equal to the Work requir'd, God is able and willing to help you, in case *you stir up your selves to lay hold upon him*, and labour to improve the Grace ye have receiv'd; and this he has given you a Proof of, in his working in you both *to will and to do* of his own good Pleasure.

Having endeavour'd to explain the Particulars contain'd in our Text, I now proceed to the Improvement. And

First. What has been said serves to in-
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form us, of the Folly and Danger, of the Principles and Practice of the *Antinomians* and *Libertines*, who slight the *Law of God*, and good *Works done in Obedience to it*, with a View to a Reward of Grace. They cry up *Faith and Grace*, to the Disparagement of good *Works*, as if we had nothing to do but *fold our Arms with the Sluggard*, and expect to be carried to Heaven on our *Couches*. But the Religion of *Christ*, is a *Mystery of Godliness*, and his Doctrines the *Truth according to Godliness*, pure Religion and undissolved, is active and laborious, it disposes to visit the *Widow and the Fatherless*, and to keep our selves unspotted from the *World*; and to add to our *Faith Vertue*, and to *Vertue Godliness*, and to *Godliness Brotherly-Kindness*, and to *Brotherly-Kindness Charity*. But to shed Light upon the Subject, let me briefly answer the most material *Objections* against what has been said. And

1st. Some Object, "That urging of good *Works* is prejudicial to *Christ's Merit*."

Answer. If we urged good *Works*, to be perform'd

perform'd with the same Intention that Christ did them as *Mediator*, namely to *satisfy divine Justice*, and *purchase a Title to Happiness* in any degree, it wou'd be derogatory to Christ's Merit, I confess, but when we urge them to be perform'd with a very different Design, namely, out of *Gratitude* to God, and with a View to obtain by them, (as appointed Means for that end) a greater Degree of *Meetness* for the actual *Possession* of that *Happiness* which we have a *Right* to, only thro' *Faith* in his *Blood* and *Obedience*, it sweetly Harmonizes with his *Merit*.

The dear Redeemer, has not only purchas'd *Glory* for his Elect, but *Grace* to prepare them for it, which he enjoyns the unconverted to *seek*; and hence they are commanded to *make them a new Heart*. Even *Simon Magus* was advised to *pray*, if peradventure the *Thoughts of his Heart* might be forgiven him. And this *Grace* the converted are enjoyn'd to improve. Good Works are one End of the Redeemer's Purchase; who gave himself for us (says the Apostle to *Titus*) that he might
redeem

redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.

Object. 2d. "Urging of Works is derogatory to free Grace by which we are sav'd."

Ans. No! For tho' God gives his Grace freely of his own sovereign Pleasure, when and to whom he pleases; yet such is his Wisdom, that he generally (in order to incite his reasonable Creatures to Diligence) gives Grace and increase of it in the Way of Means; and therefore he has told us, that for all these Things he will be enquir'd of, and COMMANDS us to ask, that we may receive. Besides it should be consider'd, that there is a Difference between a Right to Salvation, and the Possession of it: the first is altogether by Grace, but the latter is not to be expected without Works; (if there be any Opportunity to perform them) for without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.

Object. 3d. "To urge Men to work out their Salvation is vain and impossible."

Ans.

Ans. It is a Mistake: The unconverted may abstain from many Evils they commit, and seriously wait upon God in the Performance of commanded Duty, which if they do, and labour to avoid depending thereupon, there is a *Probability* of their obtaining Mercy.

Besides the Calls that are given them, have a Tendency to convince them of their Impotency, and so to humble them and prepare them for divine Grace, (I mean in respect of *Order*.)

Add to this, that they are Means of divine Appointment; which God is wont to bless for that end.

As to the converted they have a Principle of Grace, and so may stir up themselves in some sort to lay hold on God; they may strive for the Exercise of Grace and the Improvement of what they have receiv'd; and it is in this way only, that they can with reason expect it; *To him that bath shall be given.*

Object. 4th. "To urge Works is *Legal*."

Ans. If Works are urg'd with a Design to *Merit* by them, it is *legal* in a bad Sense,

Sense, and so sinful and dangerous; For such as seek after Righteousness as it were by the Works of the Law, shall not obtain Righteousness, but to urge them as the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, and as Expressions of Thankfulness to God, is no more than what Christ and his Apostles have done, and if any will presumptuously call them legal, they declare their own Shame. Now to do good Works with the Design before mentioned, is to be legal in a good Sense: *i. e.* conform'd to the Law; or in other Words, it is to be Holy; and therefore those *Libertines* that object against it, they make *Holiness* it self *Matter of Reprach.*

The Term *Legal* is much abus'd by the *Antinomians*; hereby the Ignorant are amus'd and prejudic'd against *Repentance* and *Holiness*, by empty Sounds that they do not understand. The *English* Word *legal*, comes from the *Latin* Word *lex*, a Law; so that etymologically, (or originally,) it signifies what belongs to the Law. Custom has put a bad Sense upon the Word since the Reformation from *Popery*, to denote a *Dependance*

pendance upon *Works* or *Obedience* to the *Law* for Justification, or a being discourag'd in the Way of *Obedience*, because of lamented Imperfections, while we believe and are sincerely laborious. Both these Things are doubtless very bad, and to be avoided. Now the Word is only properly used in a bad Sense when it is applied to them; but it is basely abus'd when applied by way of *Invective* against *Care* and *Labour* in *Obedience* to the *Law* of *God*. The original Meaning of the Word *legal* is good, it signifies a Regard or Conformity to the *Law*; or in other Words to be holy; and the bad Sense that has been put upon it in later Times is improper and figurative; so that to say a Man is bad because he is *legal*, or careful to conform to the *Law*, is to say in other Words, that he is wicked because he is holy, which is no very strong Argument to prove the Point.

But my Brethren, I hope you will not suffer your selves to be prejudic'd against *Truth* and *Holiness* by ignorant *Invectives*, empty Sounds, and misapply'd Words.

If any are for a GOSPEL that rejects *Obedience to the Moral Law*, there is no such Gospel in the BIBLE, Christ nor his Apostles never preach'd such a Gospel, but the contrary: It is a MYSTERY of INIQUITY and MISCHIEF: From such a Gospel good Lord deliver us!

Object. 5th. "If we are elected we shall be sav'd, whither we Work or not."

Ans. The secret *Purposes* of God, are not the *Rule* of our *Duty*, but his *Word*; *Secret Things* belong to God, but *Things revealed*, to us and to our *Children*. And such as are *elected*, are *chosen* to *obedience thro' Sanctification of the Spirit and Belief of the Truth*. Wherefore we are *commanded to make our Calling and Election sure*. First, we must comply with God's gracious *Calls*, and then our *Election* will be made sure to us, but not otherwise.

Object. 6th. "To press *Repentance* is not suitable to the Gospel."

Ans. That *Repentance* is a *Gospel Duty*, will appear by the following *Considerations*, viz.

It is *commanded* by God under the *Gospel*

*pel-Dispensation; but the Times of Ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all Men every where to repent. * And the Author to the Hebrews represents Repentance, to be a foundation-Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, †*

This was the End of Christ's coming into the World, as well as of his Exaltation; and hence he himself informs us, that he came not to call the Righteous but Sinners to Repentance. † And elsewhere it is said, him hath God exalted with his right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give Repentance to Israel and Remission of Sins. ¶

This is one Promise of the New Covenant, and a Fruit of Faith, as the Prophet Zachariah instructs us; And they shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn.**

This, a Seal of the New Covenant, namely Baptism confirms; and hence it is call'd, the Baptism of Repentance, †† and John is said to baptise to Repentance. ††

To this are made the Promises of the

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New

* Acts xvii. 30. † Heb. vi. 1. † Mat. ix. 13.
¶ Acts v. 3. ** Zech. xii. 10. †† Acts xiii. 24.
†† Mat. iii. 11.

340 *Repentance a Gospel Duty,*
New Covenant, by Christ himself; blessed
are they that mourn, for they shall be com-
*forted. **

This is *prescrib'd* by the Gospel, as the
Way to Pardon and Life; Repent ye there-
fore (says Peter to the Jews) and be con-
verted, that your Sins may be blotted out. †
Repent therefore of this thy Wickedness (says
the same Apostle to Simon Magus) and
pray God, if perhaps the Thoughts of thy
Heart may be forgiven thee. †

The Apostles and Brethren at *Jerusa-*
lem, when they heard that the Gentiles
had also receiv'd the Word of God; they
glorified God saying, *than both God also to*
the Gentiles, granted Repentance unto Life. ¶

When the convinc'd *Jews* enquired of
Peter and the rest of the Apostles, *what*
they should do to be saved? he advised them
to repent, for the Remission of Sins. **
This our dear Lord and his Apostles
preach'd, yea he began and ended his
preaching with *Repentance; At that time*
(says

* Mat. v. 4. † Acts iii. 19. † Acts viii. 22.
¶ Acts xi. 1, 19. ** Acts ii. 37, 38.

Repentance a Gospel-Duty. 341

(says *Mathew*) *Jesus began to preach, and to say, repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* * And *Luke* mentions these Words of Christ to his Disciples after his Resurrection, and said unto them, *thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third Day, and that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preach'd in his Name among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* †

Repentance, my dear Brethren, was one of the principal Subjects of Paul's Ministry; Whereupon, O King Agrippa! I was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision, but shew'd first to them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the Coast of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should REPENT and turn to God, and DO WORKS MEET for REPENTANCE. ‡ And elsewhere when he gives a summary Account of his ministerial Labours, he says, *that he kept back nothing that was profitable,*
but

* *Mat. iv. 17.* The Tenor of Christ's Commission is, to bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort Mourners. *Is. lxi. 1, 2, 3.* † *Luke xxvi. 46, 47.* ‡ *Acts xxvi. 19, 20.*

but testified both to the Jews and Greeks
Repentance towards God, and Faith towards
our Lord Jesus Christ. ¶

The Apostle Peter preach'd it to the
Jews; then said Peter unto them, repent
and be baptized every one of you for the Re-
mission of Sins, and ye shall receive the
Gift of the Holy Ghost. †

And the Apostle John declar'd it to both
Jews and Gentiles in these Words; If we
say we have no sin, we deceive our selves and
the Truth is not in us: If we confess our
Sins, he is faithful and just, (i. e. to his
Promise) to forgive us our Sins, and to
cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. *

The Apostle Paul calls it, a **GODLY
SORROW**---- a Repentance not to be re-
pented of; and rejoyc'd that the Corinthi-
ans sorrowed after a godly sort. † Now
seeing that Christ ordered Repentance and
Remission of Sins to be preach'd in his
Name, to all Nations, as before observed,
it evidently appears, that this is one impor-
tant

¶ Acts xx. 20, 21. † Acts ii. 38. * 1 John i. 9.
† 2 Cor. vii. 9.

tant Branch of the COMMISSION Christ gives to his Ministers, and therefore is one Character by which we may be assisted in judging who they are. I may add to what has been said, that *Repentance* is excluded by the Covenant of Works, there is no Place for Repentance there, no Plank after Shipwreck; * it requires nothing but perfect Obedience, and neither enjoyns nor admits *Repentance*, for it admits not of Pardon; and where there is no Forgiveness, there can be no Place for Repentance; *Repentance* and *Forgiveness* come in therefore by the *New Covenant*. From what has been said upon this Head, considered complexly, you may see, that if there be any Gospel-Duties at all, Repentance is one, and therefore that those who reject it, as *legal*, understand not what they say, nor whereof they affirm, and have found out a PRETENDED GOSPEL different from what Christ and his Apostles preach'd.

Let,

* *Nulla tabula post naufragium, Justificati amici. Legis efficiuntur*, says *Ambrose*: i. e. Justified Persons are Friends of the Law.

Let me therefore exhort you, my Brethren! to the Exercise of *Repentance*, and *other good Works*; Work out the *Work of your Salvation with fear and trembling*; and O bewail your past Defects. To this you are obliged many ways, *viz.*

First: By the *Covenant of Grace*, which consists of two Parts, namely, God's *Promise* to you, and yours to him. As he has *promis'd to be your God*, so ye have *promis'd to be his People*: *i. e.* to behave suitable to the Character of such. God's gracious Promises to assist in the Performance of Duty, does not weaken but strengthen our Obligations thereto.

The Promise of Grace proceeds from all the sacred Three, who equally concur to the Work of Redemption, and because of their different Manner of Operation, bear a peculiar Relation to us thereby. The first Person of the Trinity, as a *Father*, adopts us into his Family; the Second, as a *Head and Redeemer*, ransoms us and unites us as a Body mystical to himself; the third Person as a *Sanctifier*, consecrates us as his Temples; from all which a three-fold

fold Necessity of Obedience results, namely, that we may live suitable to the *Duty* and *Character* of Sons of God, of *Members* of Christ, and of *Temples* of the Holy Ghost, *being zealous of good Works.*

Secondly : We are obliged to good Works by the *Doctrines of Grace*, which the Gospel opens, which are not meerly *Speculative* and entertaining to the *Mind*, but *Practical*, which affect and renew the *Will*, regulate the *Affections*, and reform the *Practice* ; they are *Truths* that *sanctify* the whole Man. * *A Law of Spirit and Life*, which frees us from the *Law of Sin and Death*. † *Which make us not without Law, but under the Law to Christ*. ‡ *The Doctrines of Grace are a Mystery of Piety*, the *Religion* they explain and inculcate, is *pure and undefiled*.

Thirdly : We are obliged to good Works, by the *State of Grace* and *Liberty* into which the *Gospel* brings us, which is a *spiritual Freedom* from the *Curse of the Law*, the *Tyranny of the Devil*, and the *Dom-*

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* John xvii. 17. † Rom. viii. 2. ‡ 1 Cor. ix. 21.

nion of Sin, not a FLESHLY LICENCE, that frees us from Obedience to God's Law, but such a Liberty as engages us the more to love and serve the blessed God, both in Point of Duty and of Gratitude; *being then made free from sin, says Paul to the believing Romans, ye became the Servants of Righteousness.* * And elsewhere he addresses the believing Galatians thus; *For Brethren ye have been call'd unto Liberty, only use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh.* †

Fourthly: We are obliged to good Works by all the Benefits of Grace, whether relative or real, whether in purpose or performance, whether past, present or to come; *For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appear'd to all Men, (to all Nations of Men, to all Orders of Men) teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* ‡ The Doctrines of Grace do not only teach this, but the Gifts of Grace oblige and dispose to it.

Good

* Rom. vi. 18. † Gal. v. 13. ‡ Tit. ii. 11.

Good Works are propos'd to us as the *Effects* of *eternal Election*, which is past; and hence we are said to be *chosen*, before the *Foundation of the World*, that we should be *Holy*. *

And good Works are likewise represent- ed, as the *Fruits*, *Signs* and *Seals* of *Grace* present; but the *Fruit of the Spirit* is *gentleness*, *Meekness*, *Temperance*. † As the *Branch* cannot bear *Fruit* of it self, except it abide in the *Vine*. No more can ye, says our Lord, except ye abide in me. ¶ The *Foundation of God* standeth sure, having this *Seal*, the Lord knoweth who are his. And let every one that nameth the *Name of Christ* depart from *Iniquity*. ‡

Yea, my Brethren, good Works are also represented as the *Seed*, *First-fruits* and *Earnests* of *Glory* future; He that soweth to the *Spirit*, shall of the *Spirit* reap *Life everlasting*; and not only they, but our selves also, which have the *First-Fruits* of the *Spirit*. We groan within ourselves, waiting for the *Redemption* of our *Bodies*.

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* Ephes. i. 4. † Gal. v. 22. ¶ John xv. 4.
‡ 2 Tim. ii. 19.

The Holy Scripture represents *good Works* as having a Respect to Happiness in the coming World, somewhat like that of *Labour to the Reward, of Means to the End, of a Way to the Mark, of a Combat to the Crown*; from all which considerations it appears, that good Works are so necessary to Salvation, that it cannot be obtain'd without them; and hence the Gospel pronounces *Condemnation* upon all *unholy and prophane Persons*, and declares that *they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Dear Brethren, be excited for God's sake, and for your own Souls sake, to *work out the Work of your Salvation, with fear and trembling.* O consider, that this is the *Design* of the Father's *electing Love*, of the *Death and Life* of the Son of God; he dy'd to purchase Grace for it, and liv'd to give an Example of it. And is it not the great *Design* of the blessed *Spirit's Office* to promote this? To what but this tends every *Line* of the *Book* of God, and all Discourses drawn from it?

To promote this all *Duties* and *Ordinances* of Worship were enjoyn'd, and *Pro-*
vidence

widence in its various Aspects, either *benign* or *adverse*, bends as a well-drawn Line to this Center.

O therefore, let *Love* to God the *Father*, *Son* and *Spirit* and to our *own Souls* constrain us to *Obedience*: And O let a *Regard* to the *Glory* of God and the *Good* of Mankind engage us thereto.

Sirs! All Incentives of Action conspire in this. O let *Honour*, *Interest*, *Duty*, and *Gratitude* allure, excite, and constrain you to work out the *Work* of your *Salvation* with fear and trembling.

But why should we *Work* with *fear* and *trembling*? I answer, because God requires and deserves it, and likewise it is suitable to our dependent State, and many ways promotes our *Interest* and *Benefit*.

The commanding Will of God is express in this Matter, as our Text signifies; and this alone should be sufficient to determine the Compliance of all intelligent Creatures. But because we are naturally backward to our *Duty*, therefore other Arguments may be suggested.

The blessed God has not only a right to
our

our Fear and Reverence, because he has made us by his Power, preserv'd us and provided for us, by his watchful and kind Providence; but he also deserves it on account of his glorious Perfections, every of which are proper Objects of *Fear*, as well as powerful *Incentives* to it, when beheld in a just light. Particularly his unblemished *Purity*, his almighty *Power*, his infinite *Knowledge*, and inflexible *Justice*, his awful *Majesty* and alluring *Mercy*.

How affecting is the *Purity* of God, my Brethren! Surely Jehovah is *glorious in Holiness*. This venerable Attribute of the Deity, demerits a Tribute of Reverence from all the intelligent Creation. While the noblest Seraphims behold it, they are overcome (as it were) by its superior Blaze and Beauty, into Transport and Extacy, and cry out *holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory: they cover their Faces and their Feet with their Wings*, as unworthy to behold it and to be beheld by it. * The *Angels* themselves

felves being Creatures, cannot bear the dazzling Lustre of the divine Purity, but are conscious of their infinite Distance from the divine Perfection, and therefore are full of *Fear* and *Reverence* in their Attendance upon God. How much more then should we who are impure Creatures of a meaner Mould? O! if we had clearer Discoveries of God's Purity, we should fear him more. When the Apostle *Peter* had a Glimpse of the Glory of Christ, being overcome with its Lustre, he fell down at Jesus Knees, and said, *depart from me, for I am a sinful Man O Lord.* † We cannot behold the natural *Sun* in his meridian Altitude, with our naked Eye long, because its superior Brightness overcomes the weak Organs of our Sight.

And does not the Almighty *Power* of God deserve our Fear? A *Power* which has no *Bounds* but his own Nature and Will; a *Power*, by which with a Word and in a Moment, he spoke the stupendous *Fabric* of Heaven and Earth into Being, and by

by which he supports them in their present Order : A *Power* by which he bounds the turbulent Deep with a Girdle of Sand, that it shall not again inundate the World : A *Power*, by which he binds the *Winds in his Fists*, and brings the *Snow and Hail out of his Treasures*, as well as the *former and the latter rain* : A *Power*, by which he thunders in the Heavens, and breaks the Councils of his Enemies on Earth, and does what he pleaseth in defiance of all Opposition of Men and Devils, in the Kingdoms of Nature, of Grace, and Providence : *Who would not fear thee, thou King of Nations?* who hast a sovereign absolute Empire over all. *Fear him*, saith our Lord, *who is able to cast Soul and Body into Hell.* As Jehovah is the most valuable *Friend*, so he is the most formidable *Foe* ; *For who knows the Power of his Anger, even according to his Fear, so is his Wrath ;* we cannot equal it, far less exceed it, in our most trembling, fearful Flights of Thought, because it is infinite, and all our Ideas are finite.

- And surely, my Brethren, the *infinite*
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Knowledge of God, by which all things from everlasting to everlasting, are open at once to his Eye, is enough to strike your Souls with a solemn Awe of God. This Consideration much affected the Psalmist, (and well it might) *Thou knowest* (says he) *my down-sitting and my up-rising, thou understandest my Thought afar off, thou passest my path, and my lying-down, thou art acquainted with all my Ways.*----Such Knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. *The Darkness is as the Light to God, and the Night shines as the Day.* O Sirs! the Thoughts of God's all-seeing Eye being continually upon us, beholding us in our most secure Retreats, is enough to make us fear and tremble before him.

Add to this the inflexible *Justice of God*, which disposes him to render to all according to their Works; this is impartial in its Executions, it will not spare because of the Number or Quality of Transgressors, but render to them exactly according to the Degrees of their Guilt, and when the Time of Probation expires, it is inexora-

ble; this excites Jehovah's *Power*, and awakes his *Wrath* to Arms; this makes his *Vengeance* burn and sparkle against indolent and obstinate Transgressors; this opens impending Clouds of *Indignation*, and makes them break into resistless Torrents of Woe, which drown Sinners in a sudden Death, and sweep them off the burden'd Globe, into a swift, certain, and eternal Destruction!

And how affecting likewise, dear Brethren, is the *Majesty* and *Immensity* of the blessed GOD! which fills Heaven and Earth, and infinitely surpasses the Bounds of Matter! Tho' the Globe we tread upon be very extensive, yet it is but a Point compar'd with the visible Heavens, and that, it is probable, is much exceeded by the third Heaven; and yet we are inform'd, that *the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain God*. The Sinner therefore cannot escape his Cognizance or Justice; this Thought affected the Psalmist, who speaks in the following Manner respecting it; *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend up into*

into Heaven, thou art there: If I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there. If I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost Parts of the Sea; even there shall thy Hand lead me, and thy right Hand shall hold me. † If we ascend Carmel's Top, or dive the Ocean's Depths, God is there. He is wise in Heart and mighty in Strength, who has hardened himself against God and prospered?

And does not the *Goodness* of God, lay us under strong and ingenuous Engagements to fear him? O is it not the vilest *Ingratitude* to offend such a faithful Friend, such an indulgent Father, such a bounteous Benefactor, and requite him evil for good? Will not therefore our fear of displeasing him, rise in Proportion to the Degree of our Love to him, and that in Proportion to the Degree of our Faith in his Promises, and View of his Excellencies?

Now Sirs, if we compare our *Vileness* with God's *Purity*, our *Weakness* with his *Almightiness*, our *Ignorance* with his *Know-*
Y y 2 *ledge,*

† Psalm cxxxix. 8, 9.

ledge, our *Guilt* with his *Justice*, our *Cruelty* with his *Goodness*, may not this View make us fear and tremble before him? Moreover, is it not congruous to the State of a dependent Creature, to fear and tremble before his great Lord and Sovereign, to whom he owes, and on whom depends his All?

Yea, my Brethren, as the *Fear of God* is the distinguishing *Character* of his People, and the *Foundation* of all *Religion*, so the constant Sense of it, is of peculiar Service to promote its Interest in the Souls of Men; by this they are more conform'd to God in Holiness, and dispos'd to perform Acts of Worship to him, with a Decency and Reverence becoming a Creature to his Lord and Sovereign; and by this many hurtful Excesses are prevented; without this, we are like a Vessel that has large Sails but no Ballast, and is in the mean time beat upon with boisterous Winds and angry Waves; without this, our *Faith* degenerates into *Presumption*, our *Love* into an *effeminate Fondness*, our *Hope* into *Impudence*, our *Joy* into *Froth* and *Lightness*, our suppos'd

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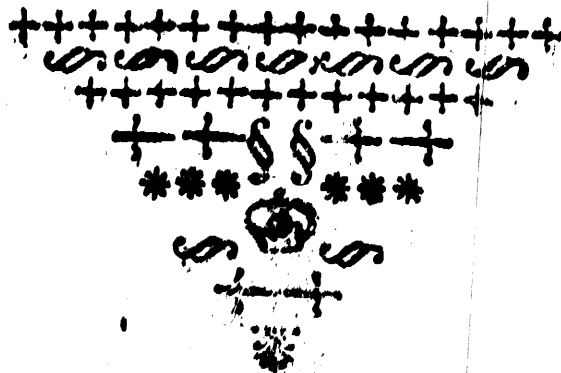
Communicn with God, into an *undecent Irreverence*, as if we were upon a par with him, who are but Worms of the Dust, that are crush'd before the Moth, and lighter than Vanity.

And indeed without the Fear of God, we are apt to be catch'd unawares, and fall heedless and headlong into every sinful Snare that we are expos'd to. *Abraham* the Friend of God, excell'd in this ornamental Grace. After his extraordinary Vision, he speaks in the following Strain; *How dreadful is this Place? This is no other than the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.* And upon another Occasion, with what Reverence did he address God, saying, *Behold I that am but dust and Ashes, have taken upon me to speak to God. O let not the Lord be angry!* In fine, the Fear of God is the Root of all true Religion, the Law of God is the Rule of it, and Obedience to that Law, is the natural and necessary Fruit thence issuing, all which Particulars, are excellently represented by *Solomon* in the Close of his Book of *Ecclesiastes*, with whose Words I shall conclude;

Motives to fear.

Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter, fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole Duty of Man. For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good or whether it be Evil.

F I N I S.



CORRIGENDA.

PAGE 97 *line* 17, read Commandments; p. 115, l. 9,
read effectually; p. 118, l. 23, read acquit; p. 190,
l. 10, read original; p. 193, l. 5, read difference; p. 218,
l. 5, read Lusts; p. 235, l. 11, read display'd; p. 299, l.
7, read enjoy'd; p. 319, l. 6, read clayie; p. 325, l. 19,
read enjoy'd; p. 345, l. 15, read makes.